

KONX OM PAX

ESSAYS IN LIGHT

BY

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CONTENTS

DEDICATION AND COUNTER-DEDICATION . . .	iii
THE WAKE WORLD	I
ALI SLOPER	19
THIEN TAO	37
THE STONE OF ABIEGNUS	47

KONX OM PAX

DEDICATION AND COUNTER-DEDICATION

WITH A NOTE ON OBSCURITY

WHEN the Neophyte enters upon the Path of Evil, there confronteth him the great angel Samael. In vain he saith that he is come from between the pillars and seeketh the hidden Knowledge in the Name of Adonai; the angel answers him: "I am the Prince of Darkness and of Evil. The wicked and rebellious man gazeth upon the face of Nature, and findeth therein naught but terror and obscurity; unto him it is but the darkness of the darkness, and he is but as a drunken man groping in the dark. Return! for thou canst not pass by."

Equally, when the Neophyte enters upon the Path of Good, doth the great angel Metatron arrest him with the words: "I am the angel of the Presence divine. The wise man gazeth upon the material world, and he beholdeth therein the luminous image of the Creator. Not as yet canst thou bear the dazzling brilliance of that Light. Return! for thou canst not pass by!" These commonplaces of the bastard mysticism of mountbacks, crude and imbecile as they seem to one who has "passed by," are curiously apt to mine intention of the moment.

Essays in Light! I hear somebody exclaim. The man was obscure enough before, but now . . . !!! Very like. 'Tis the first time I have written careless of lucidity. By the usual paradox, I may expect some solemn fool to assert that nothing ever was so plain, and (with a little luck) the rest of the solemn fools—brief, all England—to follow them: till Konx om Pax replace Reading without Tears in every Infant School.

Yet, suppose this were to happen, how would the world be advanced? In no wise. For the brilliance wherein we walk will be but thick darkness to all those who have not become so blind that light and darkness are akin. The light wherein I write is not the light of reason; it is not the darkness of unreason; it is the L.V.X. of that which, first mastering and then transcending the reason, illumines all the darkness caused by the interference of the opposite waves of thought; not by destroying their balance, and thereby showing a false and partial light, but by overleaping their limitations.

Let not the pedant exclaim with Newman that I avoid the Scylla of Ay and the Charybdis of Nay by the Straits of No-meaning.

A thing is not necessarily A or not-A. It may be outside the universe of discourse wherein A and not-A exist. It is absurd to say of Virtue that it is green or not-green; for Virtue has nothing to do with colour. It is one of the most suggestive definitions of KONX—the LVX of the Bretheren of the Rosy Cross—that is transcends all the possible pairs of opposites. Nor does this sound nonsensical to those who are acquainted with That LVX. But to those who do not, it must (I fear) remain as obscure and ridiculous as spherical trigonometry to the inhabitants of Flatland.

Kant and others have remarked on the similarity of our hands and feet, and the impossibility of one replacing its fellow in ordinary 3-dimensional space. This to them suggested a space in which they can be made to coincide.

Similarly, a constant equilibration of all imaginable opposites will suggest to us a world in which they are truly one; whence to that world itself is but the shortest step.

All our contradictories are co-ordinate curves; they are on opposite sides of the axis, but otherwise are precisely similar, just as in the case of the hands quoted above. If they were not similar, they would no longer be contradictories, but contraries.

People who begin to think for themselves usually fall into the error of contradicting normal ideas as taught by their seniors.

Thus, one learns that marriage is right and adultery wrong. One thinks, and finds the beauty of the latter, the sordidity of the former; perhaps ending, with a little wit, in defending marriage because the delights of adultery are impossible without it. This attitude is good enough, indeed, while one is talking to the grovellers; but what educates the clergy (since miracles still happen) is a truism to an actress.

If in the jungle two elephants fight lustily, he shall do little who champions either; rather snare both, tame both, ride both, as the charioteer of the Tarot with the opposing sphinxes, black and white.

Nor, O man, believe thou that finality is anywhere to be reached in words. I balance A and not-A (a), and finding both false, both true, transcend with B. But whatever B is, it is as false and true as b; we reach C. So from C to c, and for ever. Not, as Hegel thought, until we reach an idea in which no seed of self-contradiction lurks; for that can never be.

The thinkable is false, then? (once more!) Yea, but equally it is true.

So also the old mystics were right who saw in every phenomenon a dog-faced demon apt only to seduce the soul from the sacred mystery; right, too, they who “interpret every phenomenon as a particular dealing of God with the soul.” Yet the latter is the higher formula; the narrowing of the Magic Circle to a point is an easier task than the destruction of that circle (and all both within and without) by the inrush of a higher dimension.

Alas! but either way is the Last Step; lucky are most of us if only we can formulate some circle—any circle!

Nor avails it, O man, to transcend the reason by ignoring it. Thou must pass through the fire to Adonai-Melekh, child of earth! Thou canst not slip by on either side. Only when the Destruction of the Babel-Tower of Reason comes as an actual catastrophe of thy career canst thou escape from the ruins. Otherwise, what answer hast thou (O perfect mystic!) to whom the doctor speaks of men “self-hypnotized into cataleptic trances,” to whom the historian denies thy Christ or Mahomet, to whom the ethicist flings his snarls of “anti-social”; whom, indeed, all men, thyself the foremost, charge with insanity, with ignorance, with error?

Naught but an infinite skepsis saves thee here. Do not defend thy Christ; attack the place of thine opponent; challenge all his premisses, dispute the validity of his most deepest axioms, impugn his sanity, doubt his existence!

On thine own formula he is but a demon dog-faces, or God.

Destroy him, or be he: that is enough; there is no more to say.

DEDICATION AND COUNTER-DEDICATION

Dear children of earth, long have you dwelt in darkness; quit the night and seek the day! Seek not to imitate the language of the wise; 'tis easy. There is no royal road to illumination; that which I say in Light is true to the children of Light; to them of darkness is a confusion and a snare.

Knew ye what agony the nimble acuteness of mine own dialectic was to me, ye would not envy me, O dullards! For I fear ever, lest I be replacing truth of thought by mere expertness of mechanic skill. Then, seeing the thought as fear, I quench it masterly. Whence rise other evil things; the thought “Is this too mere trickery of the mind?” “Is this too cowardice?” and others by the score.

So answering one by one, and one and all, reason breaks down, and either deep sleep loosens all my limbs, and darkness falls upon my soul, or else—

But you know what else, dear children of the Light.

To you, Konx Om Pax—Light in Extension—is your natural home. You have written these essays by my pen; not on you need I bestow them; but—

*To all and every person
in the whole world
who is without the Pale of the Order;
and even to Initiates
who are not in possession of the Password
for the time being;
and to all those who have resigned
demitted,
or been expelled
I dedicate
this Revelation of the Arcana
which are in the
Adytum of God-nourished Silence.*

While, on the other hand:

KONX OM PAX

St. Paul spoke up on the Hill of Mars
To the empty-headed Athenians;
But I would rather talk to the stars
Than to empty-headed Athenians;
It's only too easy to form a cult,
To cry a crusade with "Deus Vult"—
But you won't get much of a good result
From empty-headed Athenians.

The people of London much resemble
Those empty-headed Athenians.
I could very easily make them tremble,
Those empty-headed Athenians.
A pinch of Bible, a gallon of gas,
And I, or any otherguess ass,
Could bring to our mystical moonlight mass
Those empty-headed Athenians.

In fine, I have precious little use
For empty-headed Athenians.
The birds I have snared shall all go loose;
They are empty-headed Athenians.
I thought perhaps I might do some good;
But it's ten to one if I ever should—
And I doubt if I would save, if I could,
Such empty-headed Athenians.

So (with any luck) I shall bid farewell
To the empty-headed Athenians.
For me, they may all of them go to hell,
For empty-headed Athenians.
I hate your idiot jolts and jars,
You monkeys grinning behind your bars—
I'm more at home with the winds and stars
Than with empty-headed Athenians.

THE WAKE WORLD

A TALE FOR BABES AND SUCKLINGS

(WITH EXPLANATORY NOTES IN HEBREW AND LATIN FOR THE USE
OF THE WISE AND PRUDENT)

قل هو الله احد الله الصمد لم يلد
ولم يولد ولم يكن له كفواً احد

QU'RAN.

. . . . un cantique

Allégorique, hébraï que, et mystique.

PANNY.

Except ye become as little children, ye shall in no
wise enter into the Kingdom of Heaven.—ANON.

כלחי מליך דסתומי לאינז דעאלז זנרקז זכלא 333
חבי חוא 334. וער השחא חוז מתכסיז אלז
מליז דדחלגא לגלאה וחשתא אתגליי 335.
וגלי קמי מלנא צתיקא קדישא דחא לא
בניז דלא עיאל בכסופא קמי פלטרז
עגדנא

IDRA SUTA VIII

Ra-asa isalamanu para-di-zododa ol-kari-nu aäö iali-pire-gahe
qui-inu enai butamonu od inoasa ni pa-ra-diala; kasaremeji ugeare
kahiralanu, od zodonake lukifatanu paresa ta vavale-zodirenu tolhami.
. . . Irejila kahis-a da das pa-aotza busada caosago, das kahisa, od
ipuranu teloahe karekareka ois-alamahe lonukaho od Vovina karebafé?

AVÉ.

Owe ni Ifa ipa
Omōran ni imō—
Bi a ba wipe mō—
Omōran a mō.

African Proverb.

De las cosas mas seguras, mas seguro es dudar.

Spanish Proverb.

——— tua scienza
Che vuol, la cosa è più perfetta
Più senta 'l bene, e così la doglienza.

DANTE.

AAAÖÖÖZÖRAZAZZZAIEÖZAZAEIIIIZAIEÖZÖAKHÖ
EOOOYTHÖEZAÖZAEZEEZEEZÖZAKHÖZAËKHEYEIT
YXAALETHYKH—This is the Name which you must speak in
the interior world.

JESUS CHRIST.

इमे च सम्मा विहरेयु भिक्षू ।
असुम्भो लोको ग्रहतेहि अस्स ॥

MAHAPARINIBBANNA SUTTA.

Hy is noch vísch, noch bleesch: de wýste van
ons allen
En weet niet wat hy ís: hy kan oock lícht
ontballen.

DANIEL HEINZ.

Dianae sumus in fide
Puellae et pureri integri
Dianam pueri integri
Puellaeque canamus.

CATULLUS.

美言可以市尊, 美行可以加人

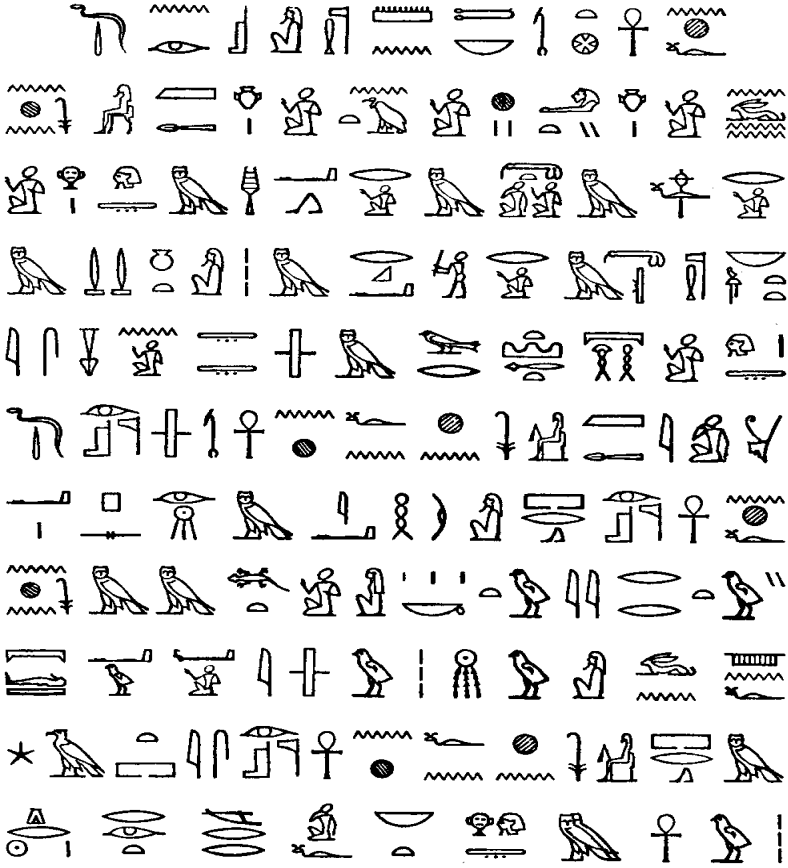
TAO TEH KING (HWAINAN'S V.L.)

Ἄσπερες μὲν ῥμφι χαλὰν σελανναν
ἀψ ἀποχρυπτοῖσι φαεννον εἶδος
ὀπποτα πληθοῖσα μαλίστα λαμπρῇ
γὰν πῖ πασαν

SAPPHO.

उपदेशं हि मुद्राणां यो दो दत्ते सांप्रदायिकम् ॥
स एव श्रीगुरुः; स्वामी साक्षादीश्वर एव सः ॥

HATHAYOGA PRADIPIKA



STELE OF ANKH-F-N-KHONSU.

THE WAKE WORLD

MY name is Lola, because I am the Key of Delights, and the other children in my dream call me Lola Daydream. When I am awake, you see, I know that I am dreaming, so they must be very silly children, don't you think? There are people in the dream too, who are quite grown up and horrid; but the really important thing is the wake-up person. There is only one, for there never could be any one like him. I call him my Fairy Prince. He rides a horse with beautiful wings like a swan, or sometimes a strange creature like a lion or a bull, with a woman's face and breasts, and she has unfathomable eyes.

Virgo Mundi

Adonai

Pegasus
Sphinx

My Fairy Prince is a dark boy, very comely; I think every one must love him, and yet every one is afraid. He looks through one just as if one had no clothes on in the Garden of God, and he had made one, and one could do nothing except in the mirror of his mind. He never laughs or frowns or smiles; because, whatever he sees, he sees what is beyond as well, and so nothing ever happens. His mouth is redder than any roses you ever saw. I wake up quite when we kiss each other, and there is no dream any more. But when it is not trembling on mine, I see kisses on his lips, as if he were kissing some one that one could not see.

V.V.V.V.V.

Now you must now that my Fairy Prince is my lover, and one day he will come for good and ride away with me and marry me. I shan't tell you his name because it is too beautiful. It is a great secret between us. When we were engaged he gave me such a beautiful ring. It was like this. First there was his shield, which had a sun on it and some roses, all on a kind of bar; and there was a terrible number written on it. Then there was a bank of soft roses with the sun shining on it, and above there was a red rose on a golden cross, and then there was a three-cornered star, shining so bright that no-one could possibly look at it unless they had love in their eyes; and in the middle was an eye without an eyelid. That could see anything, I should think, but you see it could never go to sleep, because there wasn't any eyelid. On the sides were written I.N.R.I. and T.A.R.O., which mean many strange and beautiful things, and terrible things too. I should think any one would be afraid to hurt any one who wore that ring. It is all cut out of an amethyst, and my Fairy Prince said: "Whenever you want me, look into the ring and call me ever so softly by name, and kiss the ring, and worship it, and then look ever so deep down into it, and I will come to you." So I made up a pretty poem to say every time I woke up, for you see I am a very sleepy girl, and dream ever so much about the other children; and that is a pity, because there is only one thing I love, and that is my Fairy Prince. So this is the poem I did to worship the ring, part is in words, part is in pictures. You must pick out what the pictures mean, and then it all makes poetry.

Sigilla anunuli
1. Cognonimis
666
2. I Ordinis
3. II Ordinis
4. III Ordinis.

Incantio

THE INVOCATION OF THE RING

ADONAI! Thou inmost Δ,
Self-glittering image of my soul
Strong lover to thy Bride's desire,
Call me and claim me and control!
I pray Thee keep the holy tryst
Within this ring of Amethyst

For on mine eyes the golden ☉
 Hath dawned; my vigil slew the Night.
 I saw the image of the One;
 I came from darkness into L.V.X.
 I pray Thee keep the holy tryst
 Within this ring of Amethyst

I.N.R.I.—me crucified,
 Me slain, interred, arisen, inspire
 T.A.R.O.— me glorified,
 Anointed, fill with frenzied Δ!
 I pray Thee keep the holy tryst
 Within this ring of Amethyst

I eat my flesh: I drink my blood
 I gird my loins: I journey far:
 For thou hast shown ☉, +,
 ✠, 777, καμύλλον,
 I pray Thee keep the holy tryst
 Within this ring of Amethyst

Prostrate I wait upon thy will,
 Mine Angel, for this grace of union.
 O let this Sacrament distil
 Thy conversation and communion.
 I pray Thee keep the holy tryst
 Within this ring of Amethyst

I have not told you anything about myself, because it doesn't really matter; the only thing I want to tell you about is my Fairy Prince. But as I am telling you all this, I am seventeen years old, and very fair when you shut your eyes to look; but when you open them, I am really dark, with a fair skin. I have ever such heaps of hair, and big, big, round eyes, always wondering at everything. Never mind, it's only a nuisance. I shall tell you what happened one day when I said the poem to the ring. I wasn't really quite awake when I began, but as I said it, it got brighter and brighter, and when I came to "ring of amethyst" the fifth time (there are five verses, because my lover's name has five V's in it), he galloped across the beautiful green sunset, spurring the winged horse, till the blood made all the sky turn rose red. So he caught me and set me on his horse, and I clung to his neck as we galloped into the night. Then he told me he would take me to his Palace and show me everything, and one day when we were married I should be mistress of it all. Then I wanted to be married to him at once, and then I saw it couldn't be, because I was so sleepy and had bad dreams, and one can't be a good wife if one is always doing that sort of thing. But he said I would be older one day, and not sleep so much, and every one slept a little, but the great thing was not to be lazy and contented with the dreams, so I mean to fight hard.

By and by we came to a beautiful green place with the strangest house you ever saw. Round the big meadow there lay a wonderful snake, with steel gray plumes, and he had his tail in his mouth, and kept on eating and eating it, because there was nothing else for him to eat, and my Fairy Prince said he would go on like that till there was nothing left at all. Then I said it would get smaller and smaller and crush the meadow and the palace, and I think perhaps I began to cry. But my Fairy Prince said: "Don't be such a silly!" and I wasn't old enough to understand all that it meant, but one day I should; and all one had to do was to be as glad as glad. So he kissed me, and we got off the horse, and he took me to the door of the house, and we went in. It was frightfully dark in the passage, and I felt tied so that I couldn't move, so I promised to myself to love him always, and he kissed me. It was dreadfully, dreadfully dark though, but he said not to be afraid, silly! And it's getting lighter, now keep straight forward, darling! And then he kissed me again, and said: "Welcome to my Palace!"

Regnum Spatii
Palatium Otz
Chim
Draco 𪚩

Ceremonium
o°=o°

I will tell you all about how it was built, because it is the most beautiful Palace that ever was. On the sunset side were all the baths, and the bedrooms were in front of us as we were. The baths were all of pale olive-coloured marble, and the bedrooms had lemon-coloured everything. Then there were the kitchens on the sunrise side, and they were russet, like dead leaves are in autumn in one's dreams. The place we had come through was perfectly black everything, and only used for offices and such things. There were the most horrid things everywhere about; black beetles and cockroaches and goodness knows what; but they can't hurt when the Fairy Prince is there. I think a little girl would be eaten though if she went in there alone.

Domus X
v. Regnum
v. Porta
4 Loci secundum
Elementa

Qliphoth

Then he said: "Come on! This is only the Servants' Hall, nearly everybody stays there all their lives." And I said: "Kiss me!" So he said: "Every step you take is only possible when you say that." We came into a dreadful dark passage again, so narrow and low, that it was like a dirty old tunnel, and yet so vast and wide that everything in the whole world was contained in it. We saw all the strange dreams and awful shapes of fear, and really I don't know how we ever got through, except that the Prince called for some splendid strong creatures to guard us. There was an eagle that flew, and beat his wings, and tore and bit at everything that came near; and there was a lion that roared terribly, and his breath was a flame, and burnt up the things, so that there was a great cloud; and rain fell gently and purely, so that he really did the things good by fighting them. And there was a bull that tossed them on his horns, so that they changed into butterflies; and there was a man who kept telling everyone to be quiet and not make a noise. So we came at last in the next house of the Palace. It was a great dome of violet, and in the centre the moon shone. She was a full moon, and yet she looked like a woman quite, quite young. Yet her hair was silver, and finer than spiders' webs, and it rayed about her, like one can't say what; it was all too beautiful. In the middle of the hall there was a black stone pillar, from the top of which sprang a fountain of pearls; and as they fell upon the flood, they changed the dark marble to the colour of blood, and it was like a green universe full of flowers, and little children playing among them. So I said: "Shall we be married in this House?" and he said: "No, this is only the House where the business is carried on. All the Palace rests upon this House; but you are called Lola

Via 𪚩 v. Crux

Cherubim

Domus IX
v. Fundamentum

Yod
v. Membrum
sancti foederis

- because you are the Key of Delights. Many people stay here all their lives though.” I made him kiss me, and we went on to another passage which opened out of the Servants’ Hall. This passage was all fire and flames and full of coffins. There was an Angel blowing ever so hard on a trumpet, and people getting up out of the coffins. My Fairy Prince said: “Most people never wake up for anything less.” So we went (at the same time it was; you see in dreams people can only be in one place at a time; that’s the best of being awake) through another passage, which was lighted by the Sun. Yet there were fairies dancing in a great green ring, just as if it was night. And there were two children playing by the wall, and my Fairy Prince and I played as we went; and he said: “The difference is that we are going through. Most people play without a purpose; if you are travelling it is all right, and play makes the journey seem shorter.” Then we came out into the Third (or Eighth, it depends which way you count them, because there are ten) House, and that was so splendid you can’t imagine. In the first place it was a bright, bright, bright orange colour, and then it had flashes of light all over it, going so fast we couldn’t see them, and then there was the sound of the sea and one could look through into the deep, and there was the ocean raging beneath one’s feet, and strong dolphins riding on it and crying aloud, “Holy! Holy! Holy!” in such an ecstasy you couldn’t think, and rolling and playing for sheer joy. It was all lighted by a tiny, weeny, shy little planet, sparkling and silvery, and now and then a wave of fiery chariots filled with eager spearmen blazed through the sky, and my Fairy Prince said: “Isn’t it all fine?” But I knew he didn’t really mean it, so I said “Kiss me!” and he kissed me, and we went on. He said: “Good little girl, there’s many a one stays there all his life.” I forgot to say that the whole place was just one mass of books, and people reading them till they were so silly, they didn’t know what they were doing. And there were cheats, and doctors, and thieves; I was really very glad to go away.
- There were three ways into the Seventh House, and the first was such a funny way. We walked through a pool, each on the arm of a great big Beetle, and then we found ourselves on a narrow winding path. There were nasty Jackals about, they made such a noise, and at the end I could see two towers. Then there was the queerest moon you ever saw, only a quarter full. The shadows fell so strangely, one could see the most mysterious shapes, like great bats with women’s faces, and blood dripping from their mouths, and creatures partly wolves and partly men, everything changing from one into the other. And we saw shadows like old, old, ugly women, creeping about on sticks, and all of a sudden they would fly up into the air, shrieking the funniest kind of songs, and then suddenly one would come down flop, and you saw she was really quite young and ever so lovely, and she would have nothing on, and as you looked at her she would crumble away like a biscuit. Then there was another passage which was really too secret for anything; all I shall tell you is, there was the most beautiful Goddess that ever was, and she was washing herself in a river of dew. If you ask what she is doing she says: “I’m making thunderbolts.” It was only starlight, and yet one could see quite clearly, so don’t think I’m making a mistake. The third path is a most terrible passage; it’s all a great war, and there’s earthquakes and chariots of fire, and all the castles breaking to pieces. I was glad when we came to the Green Palace.
- Via 𐌚 v. Dens
- Via 𐌚 v. Caput
- Domus VIII
v. Splendor
- Via 𐌚
v. Cranium
- Via 𐌚 v. Hamus
- Via 𐌚 v. Os

It was all built of malachite and emerald, and there was the loveliest gentlest living, and I was married to my Fairly Prince there, and we had the most delicious honeymoon, and I had a beautiful baby, and then I remembered myself, but only just in time, and said: “Kiss me!” And he kissed me and said: “My goodness! But that was a near thing that time; my little girl nearly went to sleep. Most people who reach the Seventh House stay there all their lives, I can tell you.”

It did seem such a shame to go on; there was such a flashing green star to light it, and all the air was filled with amber-coloured flames like kissed. And we could see through the floor, and there were terrible lions, like furnaces for fury, and they all roared out: “Holy! Holy! Holy!” and leaped and danced for joy. And when I saw myself in the mirrors, the dome was one mass of beautiful green mirrors, I saw how serious I looked, and that I *had* to go on. I hoped the Fairy Prince would look serious too, because it is most dreadful business going beyond the Seventh House; but he only looked the same as ever. But oh! how I kissed him, and how I clung to him, or I think I should never, never have had the courage to go up those dreadful passages, especially knowing what was at the end of them. And now I’m only a little girl, and I’m ever tired of writing, but I’ll tell you all about the rest another time.

*Explicit
Capitulum Primum
vel
De Collegio Externo.*

PART II

I WAS telling you how we started from the Green Palace. There are three passages that lead to the Treasure House of Gold, and all of them are very dreadful. One is called the Terror by Night, and another the Arrow by Day, and the third has a name that people are afraid to hear, so I won’t say.

But in the first we came to a mighty throne of grey granite, shaped like the sweetest pussy cat you ever saw, and set up on a desolate heath. It was midnight and the Devil came down and sat in the midst; but my Fairy Prince whispered: “Hush! it is a great secret, but his name is Yeheswah, and he is the Saviour of the World.” And that was very funny, because the girl next to me thought it was Jesus Christ, till another Fairy Prince (my Prince’s brother) whispered as he kissed her: “Hush, tell nobody ever, that is Satan, and he is the Saviour of the World.”

We were a very great company, and I can’t tell you all of the strange things we did and said, or of the song we sang as we danced face outwards in a great circle ever closing in on the Devil on the throne. But whenever I saw a toad or a bat, or some horrid insect, my Fairy Prince always whispered: “It is the Saviour of the world,” and I saw that it was so. We did all the most beautiful wicked things you can imagine, and yet all the time we knew that they were good and right, and must be done if ever we were to get to the House of Gold. So we enjoyed ourselves very much and ate the most extraordinary supper you

Domus VII
v. Victoria

Via ♀ v. Oculus

can think of. There were babies roasted whole and stuffed with pork sausages and olives; and some of the girls cut off chops and steaks from their own bodies, and gave them to a beautiful white cook at a silver grill, that was lighted with the gas of dead bodies and marshes; and he cooked them splendidly, and we all enjoyed it immensely. Then there was a tame goat with a gold collar, that went about laughing with every one; and he was all shaved in patches like a poodle. We kissed him and petted him, and it was lovely. You must remember that I never let go of my Fairy Prince for a single instant, or of course I should have been turned into a horrid black toad.

Via **ד**

v. Sustentaculum

Then there was another passage called the Arrow by Day, and there was a most lovely lady all shining with the sun, and moon, and stars, who was lighting a great bowl of water with one hand, by dropping dew on it out of a cup, and with the other she was putting out a terrible fire with a torch. She had a red lion and a white eagle, that she had always had ever since she was a little girl. She had found them in a nasty pit full of all kinds of filth, and they were very savage; but by always treating them kindly they had grown up faithful and good. This should be a lesson to all of us never to be unkind to our pets.

Via **ז** v. Piscis

My Fairy Prince was laughing all the time in the third path. There was nobody there but an old gentleman who had but his bones on outside, and was trying ever so hard to cut down the grass with a scythe. But the faster he cut it, the faster it grew. My Fairy Prince said: "Everybody that ever was has come along this path, and yet only one ever got to the end of it." But I saw a lot of people walking straight through as if they knew it quite well; he explained, though, that they were really only one; and if you walked through that proved it. I thought that was silly, but he's much older and wiser than I am; so I said nothing. The truth is that it is a very difficult Palace to talk about, and the further you get in, the harder it is to say what you mean because it all has to be put into dream talk, as of course the language of the wake-world is silence.

Domus VI

v. Pulchritudo

So never mind! let me go on. We came by and by to the Sixth House. I forgot to say that all those three paths were really one, because they all meant that things were different inside to outside, and so people couldn't judge. It was fearfully interesting; but mind you don't go in those passages without the Fairy Prince. And of course there's the Veil. I don't think I'd better tell you about the Veil. I'll only put your mouth to my head, and your hand—there, that'll tell any body who knows that I've really been there, and it's all true that I'm telling you.

פרכה

Ceremonium

5°=6°

Humilitas

Supplicium

This Sixth House is called the Treasure House of Gold; it's a most mysterious place as ever you were in. First there's a tiny, tiny, tiny doorway, you must crawl through on your hands and knees; and even then I scraped ever such a lot of skin off my back; then you have to be nailed on a red board with four arms, with a great gold circle in the middle, and that hurt dreadfully. Then they make you swear the most solemn things you ever heard of, how you would be faithful to the Fairy Prince, and live for nothing but to know him better and better. So the nails stopped hurting, because, of course, I saw that I was really being married, and this was part of it, and I was as glad as glad; and at that moment my Fairy Prince put his hand on my head, and I tell you, honour bright, it was more wake up than ever before, even than when he used

to kiss me. After that they said I could go into the Bride-chamber, but it was only the most curious room that ever was with seven sides. There was a dreadful red dragon on the floor, and all the sides were painted every colour you can think of, with curious figures and pictures. The light was not like dream light at all; it was wake light, and it came through a beautiful rose in the ceiling. In the middle was a table all covered with beautiful pictures and texts, and there were ever such strange things on it. There was a little crucifix in the middle, all of diamonds and emeralds and rubies, and other precious stones, and there was a dagger with a golden handle, and a cup full of the most delicious wine, and there was a curious coin with the strangest writing on it, and a funny little stick that was covered with flames, like a rose tree is with roses. Beside the strange coin was a heavy iron chain, and I took it and put it round my neck because I was bound to my Fairy Prince, and I would never go about like other people till I found him again. And they took the dagger and dipped it in the cup, and stabbed me all over to show that I was not afraid to be hurt, if only I could find my Fairy Prince. Then I took the crucifix and held it up to make more light in case he was somewhere in the dark corners, but no! Yet I knew he was there somewhere, so I thought he must be in the box, for under the table was a great chest; and I was terribly sad because I felt something dreadful was going to happen. And sure enough, when I had the courage, I asked them to open the box, and the same people that made me crawl through that horrid hole, and lost my Fairy Prince and nailed be to the red board, took away the table and opened the box, and there was my Fairy Prince, quite, quite, dead. If you only knew how sorry I was! But I had with me a walking-stick with wings, and a shining sun at the top that had been his, and I touched him on the breast to try and wake him; but it was no good. Only I seemed to hear his voice saying wonderful things, and it was quite certain he wasn't really dead. So I put the walking-stick on his breast, and another little thing he had which I had forgotten to tell you about. It was a kind of cross with an oval handle that he had been very fond of. But I couldn't go away without something of his, so I took a shepherd's staff, and a little whip with blood on it, and jewels oozing from the blood, if you know what I mean, that they had put in his hands when they buried him. Then I went away, and cried, and cried, and cried. But before I had got very far they called me back; and the people who had been so stern were smiling, and I saw they had taking the coffin out of the little room with seven sides. And the coffin was quite, quite empty. Then they began to tell us all about it, and I heard my Fairly Prince within the little room saying holy exalted things, such as the stars trace in the sky as they travel in the Car called "Millions of Years." Then they took me into the little room, and there was my Fairy Prince standing in the middle. So I knelt down as we all kissed his beautiful feet, and the myriads of eyes like diamonds that were hidden in his feet laughed joy at us. One couldn't life one's head, for he was too glorious to behold; but he spoke wonderful words like dying nightingales that have sorrowed for the fading of the roses, and pressed themselves to death upon the thorns; and one's whole body became a single eye, so that one saw as if the unborn though of light brooded over an eternal sea. Then was light as the lightning flashed out of the east, even unto the west, and it was fashioned as the swiftness of a sword.

Sepulchrum

Pastos Patris
nostri C.R.C.Baculum
I. AdeptiCrux Ansata
Pedium et
Flagellum
OsiridisCur inter mortuos
vivum petes?
Non est hic ille;
resurrexit.Advenit L. V. X.
sub tribus
specibus

By and by one rose up, then one seemed to be quite, quite dead, and buried in the centre of a pyramid of the most brilliant light it is possible to think of. And it was wake-light too; and everybody knows that even wake-darkness is really brighter than the dream-light. So you must just guess what it was like. There was more than that too; I can't possibly tell you. I know too what I.N.R.I. on the Ring meant: and I can't tell you that either, because the dream-language has such a lot of important words missing. It's a very silly language, I think.

By and by I came to myself a little, and now I was really and truly married to the Fairy Prince, so I suppose we shall always be near each other now.

Symbola Hodos
Chamelionis
Symbola Gladius
et Serpens.

There was the way out of the little room with millions of changing colours, ever so beautiful, and it was lined with armed men, waving their swords for joy like flashes of lightning; and all about us glittering serpents danced and sang for joy. There was a winged horse ready for us when we came out on the slopes of the mountain. You see the Sixth House is really a mountain called Mount Abiegnus, only one doesn't see it because one goes through indoors all the way. There's one House you have to go outdoors to get to, because no passage has ever been made; but I'll tell you about that afterwards; it's the Third House. So we got on the horse and went away for our honeymoon. I shan't tell you a single word about the honeymoon.

Explicit
Capitulum Secundum
vel
De Collegio ad S.S. porta
Collegii Interni.

PART III.

Caput candidum

NON erit **NON**

Arcana de Via
Occulta.

YOU mustn't suppose the honeymoon is ever really over, because it just isn't. But he said to me: "Princess, you haven't been all over the Palace yet. Your *special* House is the Third, you know, because it's so convenient for the Second where I usually live. The King my Father lives in the First; he's never to be seen, you know. He's very, very old nowadays; I am practically Regent of course. You must never forget that I am really He; only one generation back is not so far, and I entirely represent his thought. Soon," he whispered ever so softly, "you will be a mother; there will be a Fairy Prince again to run away with another pretty little Sleepy head." Then I saw that when Fairy Princes were really and truly married they became Fairy Kings; and that I was quite wrong ever to be ashamed of being only a little girl and afraid of spoiling his prospects, because really, you see, he could never become King and have a son a Fairy Prince without me.

But one can only do that by getting to the Third House, and it's a dreadful journey, I do most honestly assure you.

There are two passages, one from the Eighth House and one from the Sixth; the first is all water, and the second is almost worse, because you have to balance yourself so carefully, or you fall and hurt yourself.

To go through the first you must be painted all over with blood up to your waist, and you cross your legs, and then they put a rope round one ankle and swing you off. I had such a pretty white petticoat on, and my Prince said I looked just like a white pyramid with a huge red cross on the top of it, which made me ever so glad, because now I knew I should be the Saviour of the World, which is what one wants to be, isn't it? Only sometimes the world means all the other children in the dream, and sometimes the dream itself, and sometimes the wake-things one sees before one is quite, quite awake. The prince tells me that really and truly only the First House where his Father lived was really a wake-House, all the others had a little sleep-House about them, and the further you got the more awake you were, and began to know just how much was dream and how much wake.

Then there was the other passage where there was a narrow edge of green crystal, which was all you had to walk on, and there was a beautiful blue feather balancing on the edge, and if you disturbed the feather there was a lady with a sword, and she would cut off your head. So I didn't dare hardly to breathe, and all round there were thousands and thousands of beautiful people in green who danced and danced like anything, and at the end there was the terrible door of the Fifth House, which is the Royal armoury. And when we came in the House was full of steel machinery, some red hot and some white hot, and the din was simply fearful. So to get the noise out of my head, I took the little whip and whipped myself till all my blood poured down over everything, and I saw the whole house like a cataract of foaming blood rushing headlong from the flaming and scintillating Star of Fire that blazed and blazed in the candescent dome, and everything went red before my eyes, and a great flame like a strong wind blew through the House with a noise louder than any thunder could possibly be, so that I couldn't hold myself hardly, and I took up the sharp knives of the machines and cut myself all over, and the noise got louder and louder, and the flame burnt through and through me, so that I was very glad when my Prince said: "You wouldn't think it, would you, sweetheart? But there are lots of people who stay here all their lives."

There are three ways into the Fourth House from below. The first passage is a very curious place, all full of wheels and ever such strange creatures, like monkeys and sphinxes and jackals climbing about them and trying to get to the top. It was very silly, because there isn't really any top to a wheel at all; the place you want to get to is the centre, if you want to be quiet. Then there was a really lovely passage, like a deep wood in Springtime, the dearest old man came along who had lived there all his life, because he was the guardian of it, and he didn't need to travel because he belonged to the First House really from the beginning. He wore a vast cloak, and he carried a lamp and a long stick; and he said that the cloak meant you were to be silent and not say anything you saw, and the lamp meant you were to tell everybody and make them glad, and the stick was like a guide to tell you which to do. But I didn't quite believe that, because I am getting a grown-up girl now, and I wasn't to be put off like that. I could see that the stick was really the measuring rod with which the whole Palace was built, and the lamp was the only light they had to build it by, and the cloak was the abyss of darkness that covers it all up. That is why dream-people never see beautiful things like I'm telling you about. All their houses are built of common red bricks, and they sit in them

Via ♀ v. Aqua

Via ♀ v. Pertica
stimulansDomus V
v. Severitas

Via ♀ v. Manus

Via ♀ v. Pugnus

all day and play silly games with counters, and oh! dear me, how they do cheat and quarrel. When any one gets a million counters, he is no glad you can't think, and goes away and tries to change some of the counters for the things he really wants, and he can't, so you nearly die of laughing, though of course it would be dreadfully sad if it were wake-life. But I was telling you about the ways to the Fourth House, and the third way is full of lions, and a person might be afraid; only whenever one comes to bite at you, there is a lovely lady who puts her hands in its mouth and shuts it. So we went through quite safely, and I thought of Daniel in the lions' den.

Domus IV
v. Benignitas

The Fourth House is the most wonderful of all I had ever seen. It is the most heavenly blue mansion; it is built of beryl and amethyst, and lapis lazuli and turquoise and sapphire. The centre of the floor is a pool of purest aquamarine, and in it is water, only you can see every drop as a separate crystal, and the blue tinge filtering through the light. Above there hangs a calm yet mighty globe of deep sapphirine blue. Round it there were nine mirrors, and there is a noise that means when you understand it, "Joy! Joy! Joy!" There are violet flames darting through the air, each one a little sob of happy love. One began to see what the dream-world was really for at last; every time any one kissed any one for real love, that was a little throb of violet flame in this beautiful House in the Wake-World. And we bathed and swam in the pool, and were so happy you can't think. But they said: "Little girl, you must pay for the entertainment." [I forgot to tell you that there was music like fountains make as they rise and fall, only of course much more wonderful than that.] So I asked what I must pay, and they said: "You are now mistress of all these houses from the Fourth to the Ninth. You have managed the Servants' Hall well enough since your marriage; now you must manage the others, because till you do you can never go on to the Third House. So I said: "It seems to me that they are all in perfectly good order." But they took me up in the air, and then I saw that the outsides were horribly disfigured with great advertisements, and every singly House had written all over it:

Ratio Naturae
Naturatae

Adeptum
Oportet Rationis
Facultatem
Regnare

FIRST HOUSE

This is his Majesty's favourite Residence.

No other genuine. Beware of worthless imitations.

Come in HERE and spend life!

Come in HERE and see the Serpent eat his Tail!

So I was furious, as you may imagine, and had men go and put all the proper numbers on them, and a little sarcastic remark to make them ashamed; so they read:

Fifth House, and mostly dream at that.

Seventh House. External splendour and internal corruption

and so on. And on each one I put "No thoroughfare from here to the First House. The only way is out of doors. By order."

Gladium, quod
omnibus viis
custodet portas
Otz Chiim

This was frightfully annoying, because in the old days we could walk about inside everywhere, and not get wet if it rained, but nowadays there isn't any way from the Fourth to the Third House. You could go of course by chariot from the Fifth to the Third, or through the House where the twins live from the Sixth to the Third, but that isn't allowed unless you have been to the Fourth House too, and go from there at the same time.

It was here they told me what T.A.R.O. on the ring meant. First it means gate, and that is the name of my Fairy Prince, when you spell it in full letter by letter.

There are seventy-eight parts to it, which makes a perfect plan of the whole Palace, so you can always find your way, if you remember to say T.A.R.O. Then you remember I.N.R.I. was on the ring too. I.N.R.I. is short for L.V.X., which means the brilliance of the wide-wide-wake Light, and that too is the name of my Fairy Prince only spelt short.

The Romans said it had sixty-five parts, which is five times thirteen, and seventy-eight is six times thirteen. To get into the Wake World you must know your thirteen times table quite well. So if you take them both together that makes eleven times thirteen, and then you say “Abrahadabra,” which is a most mysterious word, because it has eleven letters in it. You remember the Houses are numbered both ways, so that the Third House is called the Eighth House too, and the Fifth the Sixth, and so on. But you can’t tell what lovely things that means till you’ve been through them all, and got to the very end. So when you look at the ring and see I.N.R.I. and T.A.R.O. on it that means that it is like a policeman keeping on saying “Pass along, please!” I would have liked to stay in the Fourth House all my life, but I began to see it was just a little dream House too; and I couldn’t rest, because my own House was the very next one. But it’s too awful to tell you how to get there. You want the most fearful lot of courage, and there’s nobody to help you, nobody at all, and there’s no proper passage. But it’s frightfully exciting, and you must wait till next time before I tell you how I started on that horrible journey and if I ever got there or not.

Explicit
Capitulum Tertium
vel
de Collegio Interno

PART IV.

Now I shall tell you about the chariot race in the first passage. The chariot is all carved out of pure, clear amber, so that electric sparks fly about as the furs rub it. The whole cushions and rugs are all beautiful soft ermine fur. There is a canopy of bright blue with stars (like the sky in the dream world), and the chariot is drawn by two sphinxes, one black and one white. The charioteer is a most curious person; he is a great big crab in the most lovely glittering armour, and he can just drive! His name in the mysterious name I told you about with eleven letters in it, but be call him Jehu for short, because he’s only nineteen years old. It’s important to know though because this journey is the most difficult of all, and without the chariot one couldn’t ever do it, because it is so far—much further than the heaven is from the earth in the dream world.

Nomen אברהדבא
Nomen ADNI
אברהדבא
נ.י.מ.י.ד.
Cartae Tarot v.
Aegyptiorum
I.N.R.I. =
י.נ.ר.י. =
י.נ.ר.י. =
I. A. O.
L. V. X.
י.נ.ר.י. = 65
L. V. X. = LXV

Via נ v. Vallum

Nomen אברהדבא = 22
22 × 19 = 418 =
Abrahadabra

Via ♄ v. Gladium

The passage where the twins live is very difficult too. They are too sisters; and one is very pure and good, and the other is a horrid fast woman. But that just shows you how silly dream language is—really there is another way to put it: you can say they are two sisters, and one is very silly and ignorant, and the other has learnt to know and enjoy.

Via quae non est

Vaginae

Quinque

Animae

Now when one is a Princess it is very important to have good manners, so you have to go into the passage, and take one on each arm, and go through with them singing and dancing; and if you hurt the feelings of either of them the least little bit in the world it would show you were not really a great lady, only a dress lady, and there is a man with a bow and arrow in the air, and he would soon finish you, and you would never get to the Third House at all.

But the real serious difficulty is the outdoors. You have to leave the House of Love, as they call the Fourth House. You are quite, quite naked: you must take off your husband-clothes, and your baby-clothes, and all your pleasure clothes, and your skin, and your flesh, and your bones, every one of them must come right off. And then you must take off your feelings clothes; and then your idea clothes; and then what we call your tendency clothes which you have always worn, and which make you what you are. After that you take off your consciousness clothes, which you have always thought were your very own self, and you leap out into the cold abyss, and you can't think how lonely it is. There isn't any light, or any path, or anything to catch hold of to help you, and there is no Fairy Prince any more; you can't even hear his voice calling to you to come on. There's nothing to tell you which way to go, and you feel the most horrible sensation of falling away from everything that ever was. You've got no nothing at all; you don't even know how awful it is. You would turn back if you could only stop falling; but luckily you can't. So you fall and fall faster and faster; and I can't tell you any more.

Domus III

v. Intellectio

Abest Egoitas

Ego est Non-ego

Puerperium

The Third House is called the House of Sorrow. They gave me new clothes of the queerest kind, because one never thinks of them as one's own clothes, but only as clothes. It is a House of utmost Darkness. There is a pool of black solemn water in the shining obsidian, and one is like a vast veiled figure of wonderful beauty brooding over the sea; and by and by the Pains come upon one. I can't tell you anything about the Pains. Only they are different from any other pains, because they start from inside you, from a deeper, truer kind of you than you ever knew. By and by you see a tremendous blaze of a new sun in the Sixth House, and you are as glad as glad as glad; and there are millions of trumpets blown, and voices crying: "Hail to the Fairy Prince!" meaning the new one that you have had for your baby; and at that moment you find you are living in the first Three Houses all at once, for you feel the delight of your own dear Prince and his love; and the old King stirs in his Silence in the First House, and thousands of millions of blessings shoot out like rays of light, and everything is all harmony and beauty below, and crowned about with the crown of twelve stars, which is the only way you can put it into dream talk.

Vita Adepti

Now you don't need to struggle to go on any more, because you know already that all the House is one Palace, and you move about in your own wake world, just as is necessary. All the paths up to the Second House open—the path of the Hierophant with the flaming star and the incense in the vast cathedral, and the path of the Mighty Ruler, who governs everything with

Via ♄ v. Clavus

Via ♄ v. Fenestra

his orb and his crown and his sceptre. There is the path of the Queen of Love which is more beautiful than anything, and along it my own dear lover passes to my bridal chamber. Then there are the three ways to the Holy House of the Old King, the way by which he is joined with the new Fairy Prince, where dwells a moonlike virgin with an open book, and always, always reads beautiful words therein, smiling mysteriously through her shining veil, woven of sweet thoughts and pure kisses. And there is the way by which I always go to the King, my Father, and that passage is built of thunder and lightning; but there is a holy Magician called Hermes, who takes me through so quickly that I arrive sometimes even at the very moment that I start. Last of all is the most mysterious passage of them all, and if any of you saw it you would think there was a foolish man in it being bitten by crocodiles and dogs, and carrying a sack with nothing any use in it at all. But really it is the man who meant to wake up, and did wake up. So that it is his House, he is the old King himself, and so are you. So he wouldn't care what any one thought he was.

Really all the passages to the first Three Houses are very useful; all the dream-world and the half-dream world, and the Wake-world are governed from these passages.

I began to see now how very unreal even the Wake-world is, because there is just a little dream in it, and the right world is Wide-Wide-Wide-Wake-World. My lover calls me little Lola Wide-awake, not Lola Daydream any more. But it is always Lola, because I am the Key of Delights. I never told you about the first two houses, and really you wouldn't understand. But the Second House is gray, because the light and dark flash by so quick it's all blended into one; and in it lives my lover, and that's all I care about.

The First House is so brilliant that you can't think; and there, too, is my lover and I when we are one. You wouldn't understand that either. And the last thing I shall say is that one begins to see that there isn't really quite a Wide-Wide-Wide-Wake-World till the Serpent outside has finished eating up his tail, and I don't really and truly understand that myself. But it doesn't matter; what you must do is first to find the Fairy Prince to come and ride away with you, so don't bother about the Serpent yet. That's all.

Via 7 v. Porta.

Via 2 v. Camelus

Via 3 v. Domus

Via 8 v. Bos

Domus II v.
SapientiaDomus I v.
Corona Summa

Explicit Opusculum
in
Capitulo Quarto
vel
de Collegio Summo.

الى
سلوفير

CONTAINING AN ESSAY ON

אמת

ALI SLOPER; OR, THE FORTY LIARS

A CHRISTMAS DIVERSION

هو که دست از جان بشوید

هر چه در دل دارد بگریید

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

(With suggestions for cast)

ALI SLOPER (aged 120 years) . . . Mr Christian Rosenkreutz.

BONES ("Greatly Honoured Frater

C.C.R.") . . . Mr. W..d..n Gr..ssm..th.

BABY BONES (aged fifteen months) . . { Mr. ..sc..r ..sch.. or

{ Miss L..c..l.. H..ll.

BOWLEY ("Greatly Honoured Frater

N.L.") . . . Miss L..ly Br..yt..n.

IMAGINARY CHAIRMAN, WAITS, ETC. . Any imaginary actors.

DR. WAISTCOAT'S FAMOUS TROUPE OF PANTOMIMISTS ("THE FORTY LIARS"):

Whitehead . . . Equilibrist.

Din and Doni . . . Knockabouts.

Daath . . . Sensation Baby.

Nehushtan . . . Serpentine Dancer.

The Ales (Ralph, Mike, and

Sam) . . . Serio-Comics.

Lucy Furr and Florrie Farr . Egyptian Duettists.

THE MYSTERIOUS MATHERS in his great sketch, "THE FAMILY VAULT"

(*Mr. Mathers will borrow any required properties from the audience.*)

"I reside on Abiegnus, and my name is 'Flodden' James.

I am not up to small deceits or any sinful games:

And I'll tell in simple language what I know about the bounder

That broke up our Society—and also broke the founder!"

The Clippers. . . Eccentrics.

Happy Hal Barthe with Tim

Urah and Ike Baker . . . Quick Change Artists.

Le Marbre . . . Lightning Calculator

Mac and Mic . . . Face Artists

THE YONLY YEATS.

What *are* Yeats?

Berridge and his Magic Clasp.

Mo Locke and Bill Feegur Serios.

Miss Schnarr Diseuse.

Shaddai L. Hye in his great songs:

“The Yonisuckle and the Bee.”

“New every morning is the love.”

“Hire a member, hire a member.”

“How’s that for Hye?” and

“LINGAM LONGER, LUCY.”

Dr. Jellinek Contortionist.

Barry Ether Society Reciter.

La Chic Ina In her famous

GLORY SONG.

The
Freaks.

{ Harry Canpin The India-rubbed-faced Man.
 May Imm . The only genuine Mermaid exhibiting
 Constance Sylphide, the living skeleton, in her songs “I’m the
 Empress of Rosher,” etc.
 Tabicat . The Horny Man from Mazawattee.
 Supermen . and other supers.

Nogah “The little bit of sweet-stuff.”

Lieber Herr Gott with his trained beasts; includes the Unicorn from
the Stars, only one in Europe.

Adam Cadman Low Comic.

*The Terrible Tetragrammaton**Græw-Jewish Wrestler.*

GRAND PATRIOTIC SPECTACLE

Warlike Preparations—General Eloah arrives from Temain of Edom—Colonel
 Holiun summoned from Mount Paran—The Wilderness of Seir—The Tents of
 Cushan—A Dervish stronghold—General Tetragrammaton’s flying column—
 City of Meroz I.V. desert in a body—A traitor in the camp?—Melchizek Pasha’s
 cunning move—The river Kishon sweeps away the Moabites (by Mr. Frank
 Parker)—Battle at last—Desperate stand of the Kings of Edom—Marshal Jah’s
 flank attack—Everlasting Mountains scattered—Perpetual Hills bowed (by Mr.
 Frank Parker)—Charge of the gallant Karnaim—Rout of the Edomites—The
 Dukes in full flight—And Grand Finale “Blowing up of the Tower of Babel” (by
 Mr. Frank Parker).

“GOD SAVE THE KING.”

SCENE

Practicable Drawing-room littered with innumerable sheets of double Elephant Whatman paper, about to be an impracticable Table of Correspondences. A roaring fire. Sofas and Chairs.

In presenting this play before a British audience, the Manager should come forward and say: "Ladies and Gentlemen, owing to the severe indisposition of the Author, no obscene jests will be found to occur in the dialogue of this play. The actors have, however, been instructed to pause and wink at frequent intervals, when you are at liberty to imagine an unusually profound and peculiarly foul double entendre. We have also gone to the expense of hiring people to sit in the stalls and start the laughs, so that there is no excuse whatever for any of you to complain of having passed an unprurient evening."

The scene rises. The BONES FAMILY and MR. BOWLEY sitting round the fire. Up stage, MRS. P..TR..CK C..MPB..LL chased by MR. M..RT..N H..RV..Y runs off R. and barks her shin on a chair.

Mrs P. C. I am not happy! I am not happy! O Glwyndyvaine, what shall I say?

Mr. M. H. Most people would say Damn, ma belle Mygraine!

Mrs. P. C. [Aside.] If Maeterlinck gives me a name like a headache, will not Shaw call me simply a cough-drop? *[Exit.*

Prompter. [Angrily.] The Truth!

Mr. M. H. The Truth! The Truth! The Truth!

[Exit. Blare of Trumpets.

Mrs. Bones. A truce to this theatrical folly! More coffee, Mr. Bowley?

Bowley. Please. I hope you will forgive me, Mrs. Bones, but in honour of the festive season, and as relaxation of our severe labours upon the Table of Correspondences, I have taken the liberty of engaging Dr. Waistcoat's celebrated troupe of Variety Artistes to perform at intervals during the evening.

Mrs. Bones. I'm sure we're very much obliged by your kindness; I trust it did not cost you too much.

Bowley. Waistcoat is an old friend of mine, you know; connected with the Straights—the Dover Straights—on the mother's site. Non Omnis Moriar is his motto. Very likely; but on the other hand, he's never really *quite* alive; so one can bargain with him to great advantage.

Mrs. Bones. Well, I'm sure it will all be most delightful. We get very little of the old-fashioned Christmases now.

Bones. Two thousand years hence we shall all be saying the same about Bowleymas Day in the sunset of Bowleyanity.

Bowley. Respect my modesty—Pyrrho-Zoroastrianism, if you please.

Mrs. Bones. More coffee?

Bowley. Please. You do not ask what your husband means.

Mrs. Bones. I give you two up.

Bones. To-day we celebrate Christ's birth; then, Bowley's.

Bowley. I hide my blushes in thy breast, O babe! [*Does so; the child weeps.*]
Take it, for God's sake! [*Done. The child smiles.*]

Mrs. Bones. But I thought your birthday was in October.

Bowley. It is; and why did I arrange it on that date? Because I knew that I was the Messiah—pass the baby, please!—and that people would celebrate the day according to my word.

Mrs. Bones. But why?

[*BONES signals wildly to her, but in vain.*]

Bowley. Because children born in summer thrive best.

Mrs. Bones. But why?

Bowley. Brother, you waste alarm. They have ears and hear not. But I am not talking; I am making my Table of Correspondences. I drink to my Table of Correspondences.

[*Drinks. BONES picks up a book on Indian Mysticism. Thunder. Slow music.*]

Bowley. More coffee, please. I attribute the Baby to Malkuth. Mrs. Bones, may I paint the baby bright yellow all over? Heedless of Mother's sighs and groans He painted blue the Baby Bones, in the well-known porphyrean of the late John Keats, on whom be peace. At this stage in my career—drop that silly Babu twaddle!—I offer you the following desperate alternative, greatly honoured Frater! We will go on with the Table, or I will read you my latest glorious masterpiece entitled Amath. The Hebrew for Truth, Baby! Reflect, O bat-eyed child, upon the circumstance that Amath adds up to 441, which is the square of 21, Eheieh, divine name of Kether, also mystic number of Tiphereth—*vide* Tiphereth clause in "J"—"I will devote myself to Great Work," etc., you remember—meaning Truth is of Kether the end and of Tiphereth the means, also Aleph is the Fool, Kether, Mem the Hanged Man, Tiphereth; and Tau the Sign of the Cross and the Virgin of the World. May be read by Tarot (McGregor Mathers) Fools hang Virgins! What about wise men? Hush, baby dear! Wait till you're an Arahat on Ararat, and then you'll know all about it, you beetle-headed little bitch! Nothing like early and clear instruction, Mrs. Bones. Train up a child and a moustache—why don't you get Cecil some Pommade Hongroise? I attribute Pommade Hongroise to Gemini; and it is called the Waxen or Sticky Intelligence, because it sticketh together everything that is stuck together, and disposeth in right conformation the hairs that are beneath the supernals in that Orifice of the Nose of the Most Holy Ancient One which is called His Nose, and distributeth tens of thousands of severities upon the Inferiors. This is that which is written. Psalms, xcix, 4. "The nose which is not a Nose." And again "His Nose"; wherein no mention is made of the Most Holy Ancient One, but only of Tetragrammaton. Also we have heard in Barietha that this is spoken of the Shells—Qliphoth you would call them, Baby! As it is written, She sells sea shells. Nay, Mrs. Bones, if I be drunken, it is of the Wine of Iacchus, the Dew of Immortality, the Lustral Fountain in the chalice of the Stolistes or Stolistria. Or rather attribute it to your own Mince Pie, and its Awful and Avenging Punitive Currants! But as I say, your alleged husband trains neither his child nor his moustache; and I will contend with him, I will fight and overcome him; yea, I will inflict upon him my celebrated

essay upon Truth—and he shall never rise again! It is written in the manner of Immanuel Kant? Ay, but of Immanuel Kant in bed with Bessie Bellwood. The hands are the hands of Schopenhauer, but the voice is the voice of Arthur Roberts.

Listen to the Jataka, O child of wonder and the innocent eyes, and if you yell you will be deposited in the coal-hole. Superlatively Honoured Frates and Sorores of the Order of the Tin Sunset—compare Charles Baudelaire our Lord!—assist me to open the temple—my mouth, Mrs. Bones—Mouth is part of body, and body is Temple (Colossians, iv, 15), you may say I need no assistance—in the Grade of Ten equals One and don't you forget it! [*Reads from MS.*]

אמת¹

An essay upon Truth by the boy O.M., Member of the Order of the A.:A.:

To the first paragraph of “Ascension Day” (dearly beloved brethren), it is written as a Fingerpost—and worthy is it to be graven with a needle upon the eye-corners so that whoso would be warned should be warned! “What is Truth? said jesting Pilate; but Crowley waits for an answer.”

He did more than wait: he took active measures to discover; and though an answer in the Key of Affirmation would, in its very exordium, beggar human language, yet we may do a certain amount to destroy some of the minor fallacies that obscure the vision of our weaker brethren, not, alas! veiling their eyes from Truth, but from the perception of the Great Falsehood. Just as in chemistry the schoolboy blunders over the law of Combining Weights, and finds difficulty in accepting it, only to discover that the real difficulty of the chemist is that the law is *not* true; just as the golfer painfully corrects his pull and his slice, only to learn that the pull and the slice are the master-strokes of the game; just as the brilliant and studious person arrives at the summit of his academic career, only to discover (if he have sufficient wit left over from the process) that the qualities required for success in life are a set different from, and even incompatible with, those which gave him his fellowship; so also we may help those weaker brethren who animadvert scornfully upon the circumstance that a poet, a philosopher, an adept, an emancipated man of any sort, rarely speaks the truth in the sense that the witness in a divorce case is expected to, by indicating to them the true nature of those sparks of light shaken off from the invisible Crown of Glory, sparks which they have mistaken for corpse-lights or marsh-vapours, surrounding—they think it an inexplicable paradox!—one who, in all other respects, is so high and pure a being.

The first point is, it takes two to make a lie.

A. says to B.: “I have emptied all the water from the bottle,” and tells the truth.

Student C. says the same words to Professor D., and lies. The bottle and its contents being the same in each case. [*BONES laughs contemptuously and is frowned*]

¹ The views in this essay have been deliberately left as they were originally written on 18th December, 1906, by Aleister Crowley. The discussion which follows represents with great essential fidelity the actual argument which was held after its perusal on Christmas Day. The stage directions in the essay represent the facts.

at.] Because B. wants a drink and Professor D. a bottle free from moisture. This is a malicious lie if Student C. is trying to excuse his slackness, and the accident of his having truly emptied the bottle would not absolve him.

This is Confusion of the Matter of Speech.

[BONES *opens his mouth—and shuts it again with a severe effort.*

E. says to F.: “John the Baptist had red hair,” and lies (whether in point of fact his hair was red or not), because he has no just ground for saying so.

Confusion of the Modality of Assertion.

When the Auditor is in an inferior position as to knowledge, this ranks as a malicious lie.

Mrs. G. says to Father H. in the confessional, “I have not flirted with Mr. I.,” and lies, because (on the theory) Father H. has a right to know. [BONES *interjects*, “Flirted! Autres temps, Autres mots! You’re improving, Frater!” *Reader replies* “Pig!”] But she says the same words with truth to Mrs. J., who is merely asking out of curiosity. For if she changes the subject, or is rude, it is tantamount to a confession, and Mrs. J. has no right to trick or force one from her.

This is called Keeping the Vow of Secrecy which one has sworn to one’s own Soul. [BONES *protests violently, and is reminded that discussion follows, never interrupts, the Paper.*] But why insist? The so-called casuists of the Christian Church have exhaustively investigated this subject; and all they say is none the less true because it is subtle or immoral, as the stupid and puritan pretend. Cardinal Newman may have had his faults, but he is at least a pleasant contrast to Gladstone and Kensit. If my truth is not the truth of the Divorce Court, it is because my world (thank God!) is not the Divorce Court. I prefer Christ to Sir Gorell Barnes as an authority on the Seventh Commandment; and the Spiritual Interpretation of facts is the formula “Solve” of the Theurgic Alchemist.”

What is a poet? What are his powers?

He can watch from dawn to gloom
The lake-reflected sun illumine
The yellow bees in the ivy-bloom;
Nor heed, nor see, what things they be . . .

Let Mr. Straightforward and Mr. Veracity and Mr. Scorn-to-tell-a-lie and Mr. George Washington Redivivus reflect that there are people in the world with sensoria sighted to a different range from themselves! There is such a thing as a point of view.

The Kingdom of Heaven is like unto the Man in the Moon, who stood on the shores of Lake Copernicus and said: “What a beautiful earth-rise! How wonderful are the dark shadows on yon silver globe! They are like a hare, like a dog, like a bally great rabbit with its tail in its mouth. One would say a young virgin in pink sandals with her hair in curl papers.” (For the man in the moon has read Maeterlinck and the divine Oscar.) The Angel replied: “O Man in the Moon, this is an error which is spoken concerning silver globes, hares, dogs, rabbits, Virgins, pink slippers, and the ubiquitous products of the immortal Hinde. Let us examine more closely!” Tucking forthwith the Man under his wing, the Angel flew incontinently

earthward. "The globe is bigger than I thought," said the Man. "Curious illusion: it is a concave bowl of blue," said the Man. "Nay! but it is a vast plain; and there go the ships; no doubt, were it only August I should see that great Leviathan, whom Thou (addressing the Almighty) hast made to play therein. But the silly season is long past." And he cursed it for a barren ocean. Luckily he was not Christ, or Mr. Swinburne would have found it difficult to find similes for everything he writes about; from Blake and Byron to Dekker, Dickens, Dionysius, Dio Chrysostom, and Diogenes.

Then said the Man: "It is not blue but gray; it is far-resounding and makes an anarithmical gelasm; it is salt; it is wet; it is a generator of ozone, or my olfactory organs are deceived—and oh! but my bowels are stirred within me like the young lady in the Song of Solomon when the young gentleman——" "Hush!" said the Angel. "All this is delusion; examine more closely!" "It is a universe of living things!" exclaimed the Man, for it was Thames Water that he examined through the Angel's 90 h.-p. Mercédès Pocket Microscope. "And oh! if God thought that they were good, what peculiar tastes He must have!" "Look more closely!" said the Angel, handing him a pair of Spectacles from the firm of Kelvin, Boscovitch, Son, and Haeckel. "Nothing is now visible," said the Man, "but a purely geometric conception of the mind, and a self-contradictory one at that." "Go back to the moon," said the Angel, throwing him thither with the supple yet powerful jerk which had won him the Cricket Ball event in the Celestial University Athletics, and entitled him to wear a Dark Blue ribbon round his crown (for "As above, so Beneath"—Oxford produces Angels and Cinaedes, Cambridge only men). Go back to the Moon—and mind! *No Travellers' Tales!*"

The question of the point of view leads us naturally to a consideration of the speech of those for whom the Master of Samadhi has radically changed the aspect of the Universe. How shall a god answer a man?

Frater Neophyte K. asks our S. H. Frater L. $8^{\circ}=3^{\circ}$.

"Are there such things as elemental spirits in the scientific sense?"

Now Frater L. knows that there are (just as Professor Ray Lankester would assure a Hottentot of the reality of microscopic objects), but he also knows that there are not, seeing that all is but an illusory veil of the Indicible Arcanum in the Adytum of God-nourished Silence.

Frater L. will therefore reply Yes! if he thinks Frater K. in danger of scepticism. He will reply No! if he thinks Frater K. is a curiosity-monger. In neither case will he consider the fact of the question, unless (with a secret smile) he for his own sake wishes to affirm the illusion of all thoughts. In this event he is really nearer "untruthfulness" than otherwise, even though his answer chance to coincide with fact.

This is called Perception of the Illusion of the Opposition of Contraries.

Again, Professor M. will reply truthfully to his disciple N.'s question, "Master are you hungry?" "I do not know," or cast gloom over Xenophon's *θαλασσα*, *θαλασσα* with *φαντασμα* *φαντασμα*, or even *κολυμβεθρα* *κολυμβεθρα*. Because he is sceptical of the instrument of knowledge. But he would lie in saying the same words (taking the second instance) to a common soldier of the 10,000 who did not know who he was but took him for a person acquainted with the locality.

He would not, however, care an obolus whether he was lying or not—unless he happened to be making experiments involving the subject. What he would care about was whether or no his answer showed that he was thinking as a sceptical philosopher. If so, good.

This brings us—how subtly!—to a statement which I do not wish to support by proofs. I imagine that he who is able to receive it will receive it.

This is Truth, that one should be concerned with one's own business, and with nothing else whatever. If I enter thy laboratory, O Fellow of the Institute of Chemistry, who protestest that thou dost aspire to the Great White Brotherhood, and demand of thee, "What art thou doing?" wilt thou reply, "I am extracting the enzymes from this ferment," or rather, "I am aspiring to the Great White Brotherhood." And if that question puzzle thee, as well it may, seeing that either answer is in some sense or other a lie—then see to it, I say, that thou lie not to the Holy Ghost!

Shakespeare is perhaps thought by some (may it be credited?) to have written the lines:

To thine own self be true,
And it will follow as the night the day
Thou canst not then be false to any man.

'Tis a worthy aphorism. Let the consciousness be ever directed towards the Self—by whatever Name I call Thee, Thou art Nameless to all Eternity!—and the possibility of lying is avoided.

For one speaketh not, nor, if one spake, is there any to hear. Know that the greater the Adept, the more truthful; should he—in error—speak, the more must he appear a liar to those of his fellows who hear his voice. For he speaks, as beholding the Face of God; they hear, as idols the work of men's hands that have ears and hear not, neither have they any understanding. Therefore, have the chance words of Adepts been ill-heard throughout the ages; therefore, has the world run red with blood because the Adepts have spoken Truth, and the falsehood thereof has rung its sepulchral summons down the Halls that men call Time.

[BONES *boils over*. MRS. BONES *strokes his marble brow*.

Now it hath occurred that some of the younger Adepts, the light-hearted and foolish of the Great White Brotherhood, those who slip back oftenest to normal consciousness of the Universe, so that even their pure wings are soiled in the mire of sense, perception, reason, and their foul kind, some of those boys, I say, forget the Writing on the outer Veil of the Indicible Arcanum, that rune which is written, "No separate existence!" in golden letters on the silver of the veil (just as within is written "No existence" in silver letters upon the gold of the veil).

[BONES *smiles, seeing the way to destroy the argument of the Paper*.

That rune these boys forget, miserable ones!

Therefore, lost in the unthinkable depths of their depravity, do they dream evil dreams called "Others," "Fellow-men" and the like (Fellow-men is really a nightmare so appalling that only the "pass-men" of the G. W. B. ever dream it, since it implies the ghastly and horrible phantasm of "mankind").

Now in their better selves is a certain force whose troubled reflection is called "Love." This tinctures the dream, and they instantly feel compassion for the "Others"—who, being merely unpurified parts of the consciousness, simply need annihilating—and set to work (if you please!) to redeem these "Others," to initiate these "fellow-men," to emancipate these "separate beings."

[The bitterly sarcastic tone of this passage chills the blood of MRS. BONES, and she hastily prepares more coffee.]

Therefore they determine to announce Truth to men, that Truth may make them free—it is but a step to Jonah's Whale.

Now the process of waking from these dreams of evil, of arising into the Dawn of Glory that is the true consciousness of the Adept, of annihilating these disturbed phantasms, may involve some symbolic dealing with them; but I should be inclined to assert that it need never go so far as to postulate their reality, though one might possibly conceive of *them* as credulous to that extent.

One could only harm them, though, by allowing them to possess such thoughts (involving further discrimination) as the perception of the pairs of opposites as real. In fact, my thought "Bones" may be allowed to believe that he is real, and that there is no other God but he—for such a thought is hardly an illusion—but Bones must not and shall not think that there is an opposition of black and white, good and evil, truth and falsehood.

One of our weaker brethren (and I alas! had relied on him as strong among the strong!) recently plumed himself vastly on this perception of the Illusion of the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil—though "Why in the name of Glory was he proud?" considering that he had the authentic dictum of very Tikkunim for referring that Tree to Malkuth, the first and easiest broken of the false fires of Loki that surround the Virgin of the World!—and yet a week or so passed by, and he was found carping at a question of mere verbal accuracy. [BONES, *conscience-smitten, protests feebly.*] Truth and falsehood in the British "I'm a plain man, sir, and I like a plain answer to a plain question" sense are, on the lowest grounds, but details of Morality: Morality is but a branch of that Tree of Knowledge; and yet so far may the Adept fall from his Samadhic consciousness that he is found with atavistic ardour recalling his father's last instructions ere he left home for school—"and, Talbot, mind you always tell the truth, whatever comes of it!" the "Talbot" itself being a deliberate lie told under the sacred seal of baptism in the silly snobbish hope of persuading strangers that his ancestors were all Talbots, and that it is but by some complication of the *loi Salique* that his surname is Stubbs—even though that is notoriously but an honest British corruption of St. Hubert.

Once leave *The Truth*, however the mind interpret that Aleph of the Samadhic Language, and it seems there is no road back to it. Thus Samadhi comes as a shock, as a negation, as a cessation; because only by destruction can one attain thereto. Samadhi is never the idea House of Cards one thinks to build; but the toppling over of such a house may mean somewhat. The toppling over of Babel by Temurah (in the mode Athbash) is Sheshak (Jeremiah, xxv, 26) 620, Kether. One cannot construct an Adept, train, breed, or even imagine or create one; but by destroying all the thoughts of a man—what remains?

David, we conceive, entered into no intrigues to obtain the Crown of Israel; on the contrary, he slew a lion and a bear¹ that rose up against him; and when he had further destroyed Goliath,² the prophet sought him out and anointed him King over Israel.

Surely who is anointed shall be crowned. Verily; but when? When not only Saul the usurper, but Jonathan whom he loved more than his own soul, are Dead.

We do not hear of the resurrection of Jonathan; we do not read of a Jonathan Memorial Ward in the Jerusalem Lock Hospital; no word has come down to us through the ages of a Honeycomb Day, in view of the fact that the primrose is not indigenous to Palestine.

[Laughter and cheers.

Jonathan was dead, and David probably let the dead bury him. Come Thou, and follow Me! adds Christ to a similar exhortation, and while we pass with a pitying smile over the antithesis, or allow that it is but a talking-down to the level of his hearer, we must adoringly recognize the One-pointedness of the command. Let everything die, and stay dead. Let there be one thing, which is No thing. Enough.

Such is the foolish attempt of the boy O.M. to instruct the adults with whom he is thrown by the force of the Great Falsehood. Let him become as a little child!

He has sought to write Truth; is any ready to receive it? Will he not be misunderstood? Will not one set of fools cry “Casuist!” and their twin brethren exclaim: “Here, indeed, at last shine wisdom, and virtue, and multiscent truth!”?

No: for the Essay, and the Hearer, what are they but dog-faced demons, that manifest no sign of Truth, but seduce ever from the Sacred Mysteries? Affirm their identity with the One that is None, or destroy them—these are the two aspects of the supreme Ritual, and these two are one, which is None. Thus far the authentic voice of O.M.

[Respectful silence.

The Chairman. Now, Mr. Bones, with the accent on the Now, we shall be glad to hear any remarks you may have to make.

Mr. Bones. We have all listened, I am sure, with great attention to Mr. Bowley’s valuable paper. At this late hour, however, it would ill become me [*No! No!*]³—it would little accord with the disposition of this meeting were I to [*A voice:* “Cut the cackle, man, and come to the ’osses.”]⁴—I am sure our greatly honoured Frater [*A voice:* “Speak up!”]⁵—I thunder in your ears! It’s a fine paper, but it’s all R. O. T. Rot. [*Christmas waits outside begin the hymn:*

In the hospital bed she lay
Rotting away—Rotting awa-a-y!

¹ Babel—correctly spelt בָּבֶלֶט — = 36, 6 × 6. לֵוִי, Lion = 216 = 6 × 6 × 6. And רֶבֶב, Bear = 6. Six is Tiphereth, the symbol of the Ruach.

² גִּלְיָת 443 short by Unity of 444—the divine Tetragrammaton *without* Kether, the top point of the “ (for 444 = 4 × 111 which is יָדִי the type of letters. So Goliath is all that which is not Kether—and must be destroyed.

Sortie of MRS. BONES to disperse them.] What I principally wish to point out is the element of contradiction in the valuable paper to which we have all I am sure listened with remarkable pleasure. [*Oh! chuck it!*] Was I called upon, or were you?

The Chairman. Order, if you please, greatly honoured Fratres. Mr. Bone has the floor.

A Voice. What will Mrs. Bones say to that?

The Chairman. [*Sternly.*] If I have any more unseemly interruptions of this kind, I shall clear the Court.

Mr. Bones. Thank your, sir. The very valuable paper to which I am sure——

[*Tumult.*

The Chairman. All those below the grade of Lords of the Absence of Paths in the Abyss of the Great Gulf Fixed will kindly leave the Court. I will myself set the example.

[*Exeunt. BONES and BOWLEY soli.*

Bowley. Your method of keeping silence is a good one. Dialogue is the best form, after all. But hush! who comes?

Enter the YONLY YEATS, with druid apple-blossom in his hair, and the druid casting-net of the stars in one hand. Does his turn and exit.

Bones. To continue—True! And saying “true,” let us discuss “truth.” In the lower worlds, where are we? Take this frivolous Mrs. I. Why does she elude Mrs. J.? From fear.

Bowley. Fear is failure.

Bones. More, G. H. Frater! It is the forerunner of failure.

Bowley. I certainly recommend people to be without fear.

Bones. The more so that in the heart of the coward virtue abideth not.

Bowley. Pass thou on!

Bones. I take in my hand page 39 of your able monograph and follow my guide Axiokersos, the Second of the Samothracian Kabeiri, to the Portal on whose veil is written “No separate Existence!” If I assert my own point of view, I deny the Unity—But hush! who comes here!

Enter WHITEHEAD, equilibrist, does his turn, makes a Long Nose, and exit.

Bowley. Re what you just said now, you can’t play at Kether down in Malkuth.

Bones. I scorn the remark. Wait! By answering the fool according to his folly——

Bowley. You degrade yourself to his level. But hush! who comes here?

Enter NOGAH.

My little bit of sweet-stuff!

[*She exhibits her External Splendour and Internal Corruption, and exit.*

Bones. As to levels though, all levels are one. If I cancel out a and –a, the result is the same as if I cancel 1000a and –1000a. I am only concerned to cancel.

Bowley. All right, my gay 10=1—in Kether its all very well. In the Ruach one must do as the Ruach does.

[MRS. BONES, *without, screaming*, “My spoons! My silver spoons! Where are my spoons?”]

Bones. Then what becomes of the Great Work?

Bowley. Ignore the fool and his silly questions is as good a formula as yours. But hush! Who comes here?

Enter the MYSTERIOUS MATHERS, but, failing to borrow the necessary properties, is unable to give his performance, and exit.

Bones. This action *does* interrupt the dialogue.

Bowley. Go to! Do you think I’ve studied British Drama for years for naught?

[*Voices without, complaining of material loss.*]

Bowley. As I was saying, I would rather destroy the fool by ignoring him and his silly questions. But hush! who comes here?

Enter NEHUSHTAN, and performs Serpentine Dance. Exit.

Bones. In answer to your last remark, you and I are near enough to the Halls of the Great Order to know how secret is the Brotherhood. What if your fool with his silly question should be a Master of the Temple talking to you in Samadhic language?

Bowley. My dear man, I will destroy him as soon as the rest. *ὁὐ μὴ* is my reply to Binah as well as to Jesod. But hush! who comes here?

*Enter SHADDAI L. HYE, sings his songs and exit.*¹

Anyway, all this is a silly bit of morality. It arose from my trying to save my wife pain by concealing from her the fact that she was not, in the grand phrase of Emerson——

Bones. Washington Irving, I think——

Bowley. Some Yankee—the only oyster in the stew.

Bones. Who told you, Supreme Magus of our Ancient Order! [*with profound sarcasm*] to go about saving people pain?

Bowley. I give in. But really I tell you that you will never attain to the Brotherhood until you have genuinely conquered the Illusion of the Pairs of Opposites. Truthfulness and Lying are just as much opposites as white and black, good and evil——

Bones. I sometimes doubt if any of these are opposites at all. Next time you run up to Kether, look down the Tree and see what Truth looks like from up there! Take the case of heat and cold, at one time the typical opposites. Nowadays we conceive of a hot body as one in violent internal motion, a cold body as in moderate motion.

Bowley. Fast and slow.

Bones. Or even (to allow the enemy every advantage, let us say) moving and reposing. But these are not opposites. Zero and unity are not opposites.

Bowley. Yet in another sense *any* two things are opposites.

¹ It needs little creative genius to introduce dextrously the various members of Dr. Waistcoat’s troupe. I therefore leave the rest of it to Stage Managers to arrange as they will.

Bones. That is in Kether again. If you wish to cancel a number, however, zero is no use to you; you need a minus quantity.

Bowley. Which (you are no doubt going to say) demands a geometrical interpretation, and a very conventional one at that.

Bones. Yes; even the Ruach can in a sense get rid of the Opposites. How much more then when we observe the matter from the point of view of Samadhi!

Bowley. Then what is the converse of Truth?

Bones. My dear Pilate, it certainly is not falsehood. A crooked line is not the contradictory of a straight one. Curves and corners alike exclude the straight line and——

Bowley. No proposition can possibly have *two* logical contradictories.

Bones. There I pass.

Bowley. Keynes.

Bones. I should certainly have brought it in justifiable homicide had the remark been Abel's.

Bowley. Our old friendship——

Bones. All very well—you know I should never have made such a remark in real life and it's dam bad form to give it me in a dialogue where I can't help myself, but have to say exactly what you like.

Bowley. Oh, come! I've given you all the best speeches. The Lord hath given—look out!

Bones. I trust to your honour. Where were we? Anyway, I tell you this: it's a ripping good formula as such.

Bowley. Now we come down to the Black Magician and his circle again; all right, I am with you. I can never help suspecting you of morality, though; you're a devilish deep Johnny, but the atavism comes through. As long as you wear a tie that the Neanderthal cave man would have discarded as out of date I can never quite class you with this century.

Bones. Before Abraham was, I am.

Bowley. [*Taking no notice.*] I call it a Christian tie. Faith in your wife's affection surviving it; charity, which is not ashamed; hope—no, only Hope Brothers.

Bones. This is in some ways a digression——

Bowley. I can prove——

Bones. I know you can. Don't.

Bowley. Well, about truth. Surely I am right in saying that "I don't know" and keeping silence—both subjective formulas—are equal in value to yours of telling truth to a man in the sense he understands.

Bones. Yes; I may grant so much: but my formula is a good one too.

Bowley. I promise to try it.

Bones. You have two advantages. One is the common or Garden Magic; you acquire the habit of telling truth in the low material objective sense, and nature is bound (as Levi says) "to accommodate herself to the statement of the magician." Thus, one may take hold of a hot iron, or coal, saying "It does not hurt" and it doesn't.

Bowley. I have tried that. But I thought it a question of courage and will.

The Hindus have a game they call the Act of Truth. I remember one time King Brahmadatta or some ass wanted to cross the Ganges with his army and like a fool hadn't brought pontoons; so he dammed around for a hell of a time like a cat when you pepper her nose, and by and by up comes "well, I won't say a ——, but a lady of no reputation," and says, By Gosh, king, why don't we go and give long-armed Bhishma and that crowd Johnny up the Orchard? All right, saucy! says Brahmadatta, 'ow are we goin' to cross the bloomin' ditch?

Keep your hair on, old cock, chirps the darling of India's teeming but unsaved population. Step aside a mo, and let the Dauntless Daisy of the Deccan Drains perform. See here, boys, I'm a—well, what a flapper grows up to be if she's good!—and I've given every son of a —— what's—tut! tut! this story is a very difficult story to tell—flirted with me his dollar's worth, and Lord knows how many cents change, not to mention a rare lot of things which I will not specify, thrown in. Any one in this army who denies this can come round any time and get square free of charge.

So the river rolled back and Brahmadatta walked across and gave long-armed Bhishma the Togo Touch, and wiped the maidan with Brer Bhima, and biffed Greatly Honoured Frater Dritirashtra in the eye, and mopped up Old Man Saraswati, and clave Sir Jnanakasha from the nave to the chaps, and generally made a Grand Slam in Swords. Any one but a benighted Hindu would have declared Hearts and sent the girl across on a raft!

Bones. I don't see it, quite.

Bowley. Nor do I. It's the story, though.

Bones. I suppose devotion to one's profession is a form of Truth. But even if, as you say, it is often a question of courage and will, these are the very qualities which this truth telling stimulates. It's a V.C. touch to reply to a lady who asks how her hat suits "Not at all."

Bowley. It seems to me mere boorishness.

Bones. No! the lady is none the worse for the stab to her silly vanity; and though she may be angry or sulky, she will remember it in your favour when anything serious turns up.

Bowley. You dog! You devil! You Machiavellian satyr! On my word, sir—words fail me.

Bones. One thing more—it's the first truth that's difficult to tell; the habit is easily acquired.

Bowley. You know what an expert liar I have always been. You know my capacity for making a full and true confession of countless crimes without enlightening a soul. You know my shameless maxim, "Tell the truth, but lead so improbable a life that the truth will not be believed." To try your formula I must control not only my words, but my tones, the shape of my mouth, the mirth of my eyes, the ready ambiguity of my shoulders.

Bones. A good exercise, Frater.

Bowley. Another point. I am, after all, a Poet. That's right about the lake-reflected sun illuminating the blooming bees. I often hold long conversations with people and discover long after that *I* wasn't there at all. I often dream and am honestly puzzled whether the events of it have or have not happened.

Bones. Consciously refuse to admit that your sensorium is not another's—that is all. About my second advantage—Brother, what is a Black Magician?

Bowley. A bold bad man, brother.

Bones. What does he do, brother?

Bowley. He buys eggs without haggling, and the horns of a goat *cum quo*, and parricide's skulls, and wands, and daggers, and Sanitary Towels, and——

Bones. Then what does he do, brother?

Bowley. He gets a beautiful big circle——

Bones. [*In a voice of thunder.*] Stop! do not parody the most formidable words that agony ever wrung from the lips of initiation. He works in a circle, brother. He says: I am inside, and *you* can't get at *me*. He says One and One are Two!

Bowley. The blaspheming Jew! I want his liver.

Bones. For your own cauldron, deboshed child of Belial that you are!

Bowley. I see. When you are up in 10=1 or thereabouts, and see that dog-faced demons are only illusions (with the rest of Maya), there is no sense in keeping them out. Once you realize the Universe as Infinite L.V.X., why, to Hell with the Circle—let it rush in!

Bones. Good boy!

Bowley. Very good: we are agreed; but the trouble is that you seem to me to rush up to Kether for an attitude, and then bring it down to Malkuth. You take the Virgin of the World and swear she has a Venerable Beard with thirteen Fountains of magnificent oil running down it. All being one, why not brush your hair with a pitchfork?

Bones. It is a very difficult matter to deal with in speech; in practice there is never any doubt or hesitation. What I say about Kether is of course not true; I cannot even know the truth unless I am actually *in* Kether. If I describe Samadhi, I fail. You understand enough (may be) to feel sure that I was there; but how is an outsider to judge?

Bowley. True; Buddha, Christ, Mohammed, all try to describe it—how great is the contradiction of their teaching!

Bones. Especially as interpreted by followers absolutely wallowing in Ruach.

Bowley. Shall we leave it at that? That Bones finds objective truth a Way up the Tree, and a Fruit in the topmost bough?

Bones. I am more positive than that.

Bowley. Less Zoroaster and more Pyrrho, please Lord, for Brother Bones! else you will fall into the way of Paul, and perish in the gainsaying of Mohammed.

Bones. You are obstinate about the necessity of scorning the objective results of illumination. But let us consider the perfect man.

Bowley. Oh, brother, this is fulsome.

Bones. Ass! . . . He lives (it is true) in Kether; but his mind and body, perfect though they are, work, as it were automatically, in their own plane. At present I am quite unconscious of my heart beating; it is not even a illusion! Yet it maintains its just relation to the other illusory things. So, no doubt, an adept is quite unconscious of the acts and thoughts performed by him, acts and thoughts which seem to imply conscious volition. What about your poetry?

Bowley. Certainly, I am never—very seldom—very very seldom—aware of what I am going to write, am writing, have written. I know, for example, roughly, that we have been talking about Truth to-night. But Heaven help me if I should try to reproduce the arguments or apportion the speeches! A great deal of my verse is the mere reflection of my rapture—a rapture, may be, of dissimilar nature. I fall in love, and write “The God-Eater”; see Citlaltepētl, and out comes “Night in the Valley!” “What he poured in at the mouth o’ the mill as a 33rd Sonata (fancy now!) Comes from the hopper as bran-new Sludge, naught else, The Shakers’ Hymn in G with a natural F Or the Stars and Stripes set to consecutive Fourths.” I am not a poet; I am a typewriter. A very complex machine, and one capable of self-adjustment and improvement; but I can’t dictate as much as a business letter. The machine needs the Operator before a single key can be pressed. If Bowley goes mad (the quartos have “madder”), or dies, our Superlatively Honoured Frater so and so has lost his machine and must find another; and that’s the view from Binah; but the view from Chesed is “Let me keep this machine in perfect order, in case our S.H. Frater wants to dictate.”

Bones. Just so; and if Brother Bowley goes on lying, our S.H. Frater will one day strike the A key and find a B on the paper. Then he will probably say: Damn the machine!—and do it.

Bowley. We are leaving exactitude and wallowing in analogy. We have run up and down the planes till we are less like Exempt Adepts than monkeys on sticks; we——

Bones. We had better go to bed.

天 道

(THIEN TAO)

A POLITICAL ESSAY

BY

郭
禮
雅

天道

OR,

THE SYNAGOGUE OF SATAN

My object all sublime
I shall achieve in time—
To make the punishment fit the crime—
The punishment fit the crime!

W.S. GILBERT.

I

俗 薄 (“THE DECAY OF MANNERS.”)

SINCE nobody can have the presumption to doubt the demonstration of St. Thomas Aquinas that this world is the best of all possible worlds, it follows only that the imperfect condition of things which I am about to describe can only obtain in some other universe; probably the whole affair is but the figment of my diseased imagination. Yet if this be so, how can we reconcile disease with perfection?

Clearly there is something wrong here; the apparent syllogism turns out on examination to be an enthymeme with a suppressed and impossible Major. There is no progression on these lines, and what I foolishly mistook for a nice easy way to glide into my story proves but the blindest of blind alleys.

We must begin therefore by the simple and austere process of beginning.

The condition of Japan was at this time (what time? Here we are in trouble with the historian at once. But let me say that I will have no interference with my story on the part of all these dull sensible people. I am going straight on, and if the reviews are unfavourable, one has always the recourse of suicide) dangerously unstable. The warrior aristocracy of the Upper House had been so diluted with successful cheesemongers that adulteration had become a virtue as highly profitable as adultery. In the Lower House brains were still esteemed, but they had been interpreted as the knack of passing examinations.

The recent extension of the franchise to women had rendered the Yoshiwara the most formidable of the political organizations, while the physique of the nation had been seriously impaired by the results of a law which, by assuring them in the case of injury or illness of a life-long competence in idleness which they could never have obtained otherwise by the most laborious toil, encouraged all workers to be utterly careless of their health. The training of servants indeed at this time consisted solely of careful practical instruction in falling down stairs; and the richest man in the country was an ex-butler who, by breaking his leg on no less than thirty-eight occasions, had acquired a pension which put that of a field-marshal altogether in the shade.

As yet, however, the country was not irretrievably doomed. A system of intrigue and blackmail, elaborated by the governing classes to the highest degree of efficiency, acted as a powerful counterpoise. In theory all were equal; in practice the permanent officials, the real rulers of the country, were a distinguished and trustworthy body of men. Their interest was to govern well, for any civil or foreign disturbance would undoubtedly have fanned the sparks of discontent into the roaring flames of revolution.

And discontent there was. The unsuccessful cheesemongers were very bitter against the Upper House; and those who had failed in examinations wrote appalling diatribes against the folly of the educational system.

The trouble was that they were right; the government was well enough in fact, but in theory had hardly a leg to stand on. In view of the growing clamour, the official classes were perturbed; for many of their number were intelligent enough to see that a thoroughly irrational system, however well it may work in practice, cannot for ever be maintained against the attacks of those who, though they may be secretly stigmatized as doctrinaires, can bring forward unanswerable arguments. The people had power, but not reason; so were amenable to the fallacies which they mistook for reason and not to the power which they would have imagined to be tyranny. An intelligent *plebs* is docile; an educated *canaille* expects everything to be logical. The shallow sophisms of the socialist were intelligible; they could not be refuted by the profounder and therefore unintelligible propositions of the Tory.

The mob could understand the superficial resemblance of babies; they could not be got to understand that the circumstances of education and environment made but a small portion of the equipment of a conscious being. The brutal and truthful "You cannot make a silk purse out of a sow's ear" had been forgotten for the smooth and plausible fallacies of such writer as Ki Ra Di.

So serious had the situation become, indeed, that the governing classes had abandoned all dogmas of Divine Right and the like as untenable. The theory of heredity had broken down, and the ennoblement of the cheesemongers made it not only false, but ridiculous.

We consequently find them engaged in the fatuous task of defending the anomalies which disgusted the nation by a campaign of glaring and venal sophistries. These deceived nobody, and only inspired the contempt, which might have been harmless, with a hate which threatened to engulf the community in an abyss of the most formidable convulsions.

Such was the razor-edge upon which the unsteady feet of the republic strode when, a few years before the date of my visit, the philosopher Kwaw landed at Nagasaki after an exhilarating swim from the mainland.

II

獨立 (“STANDING ALONE.”)

KWAW, when he crossed the Yellow Sea, was of the full age of thirty-two years. The twenty previous equinoxes had passed over his head as he wandered, sole human tenant, among the colossal yet ignoble ruins of Wei Hai Wei. His only companions were the lion and the lizard, who frequented the crumbling ruins of the officers' quarters; while in the little cemetery the hoofs of the wild ass beat (useless, if he wishes to wake them) upon the tombs of the sportsmen that once thronged these desolate halls.

During this time Kwaw devoted his entire attention to the pursuit of philosophy; for the vast quantities of excellent stores abandoned by the British left him no anxiety upon the score of hunger.

In the first year he disciplined and conquered his body and its emotions.

In the next six years he disciplined and conquered his mind and its thoughts.

In the next two years he had reduced the Universe to the Yang and the Yin and their permutations in the trigrams of Fo-hi and the hexagrams of King Wu.

In the last year he abolished the Yang and the Yin, and became united with the great Tao.

All this was very satisfactory to Kwaw. But even his iron frame had become somewhat impaired by the unvarying diet of tinned provisions; and it was perhaps only by virtue of this talisman

N	A	H	A	R	I	A	M	A
A			Q					
H							E	
A		Q						
R								
I								
A						Q		
M						Q	A	
A								

that he succeeded in his famous attempt to outdo the feats of Captain Webb. Nor was his reception less than a triumph. So athletic a nation as the Japanese still were could not but honour so superb an achievement, though it cost them dear, inasmuch as the Navy League (by an astute series of political moves) compelled the party in power to treble the Navy, build a continuous line of forts around the sea-couast, and expend many billions of yen upon the scientific breeding of a more voracious species of shark than had hitherto infested their shores.

So they carried Kwaw shoulder-high to the Yoshiwara, and passed him the glad hand, and called out the Indians, and annexed his personal property for relics, and otherwise followed the customs of the best New York Society, while the German Band accompanied the famous Ka Ru So to the following delightful ballad:

CHORUS. Blow the tom-tom, bang the flute!
 Let us all be merry!
 I'm a party with acute
 Chronic beri-beri.

I.

Monday I'm a skinny critter
 Quite Felicien-Rops-y.
 Blow the cymbal, bang the zither!
 Tuesday I have dropsy.

Chorus.

II.

Wednesday cardiac symptoms come;
 Thursday diabetic.
 Blow the fiddle, strum the drum!
 Friday I'm paretic.

Chorus.

III.

If on Saturday my foes
 Join in legions serried,
 Then, on Sunday, I suppose,
 I'll be beri-beried!

Chorus.

One need not be intimately familiar with the Japanese character to understand that Kwaw and his feat were forgotten in a very few days; but a wealthy Daimio, with a taste for observation, took it into his head to inquire of Kwaw for what purpose he had entered the country in so strange a manner. It will simplify matters if I reproduce *in extenso* the correspondence, which was carried on by telegram.

- (1) Who is your honourable self, and why has your excellency paid us cattle the distinguished compliment of a visit.
- (2) This disgusting worm is great Tao. I humbly beg of your sublime radiance to trample his slave.
- (3) Regret great toe unintelligible.
- (4) Great Tao—T. A. O.—Tao.
- (5) What is the great Tao.
- (6) The result of subtracting the universe from itself.
- (7) Good, but this decaying dog cannot grant your honourable excellency's sublime desire, but, on the contrary, would earnestly pray your brilliant serenity to spit upon his grovelling "joro."
- (8) Profound thought assures your beetle-headed suppliant that your glorious nobility must meet him before the controversy can be decided.

- (9) True. Would your sublimity condescend to defile himself by entering this muck-sweeper's miserable hovel?
- (10) Expect leprous dragon with beri beri at your high mightiness's magnificent heavenly palace to-morrow (Thursday) afternoon at three sharp.

Thus met Kwaw, the poet-philosopher of China; and Jujum the godfather of his country.

Sublime moment in eternity! To the names of Joshua and Hezekiah add that of Kwaw! For though he was a quarter of an hour late for the appointment, the hands went back on the dial of Juju's chronometer, so that no shadow of distrust or annoyance clouded the rapture of that supreme event.

III

顯 質 ("THE MANIFESTING OF SIMPLICITY.")

"WHAT," said Juju, "O great Tao, do you recommend as a remedy for the ills of my unhappy country?"

The sage replied as follows: "O mighty and magniloquent Daimio, your aristocracy is not an aristocracy because it is not an aristocracy. In vain you seek to alter this circumstance by paying the noxious vermin of the Dai Li Pai Pur to write fatuous falsehoods maintaining that your aristocracy is an aristocracy because it is an aristocracy.

"As Heracleitus overcame the antinomy of Xenophanes and Parmenides, Melissus and the Eleatic Zeno, the Ens and the Non-Ens by his Becoming, so let me say to you; the aristocracy will be an aristocracy by becoming an aristocracy.

"Ki Ra Di and his dirty-faced friends wish to level down the good practice to the bad theory; you should oppose them by levelling up the bad theory to the good practice.

"Your enviers boast that you are no better than they; prove to them that they are as good as you. They speak of a nobility of fools and knaves; show to them wise and honest men, and the socialistic ginger is no longer hot in the individualistic mouth."

Juju grunted assent. He had gone almost to sleep, but Kwaw, absorbed in his subject, never noticed the fact. He went on with the alacrity of a steam-roller, and the direct and purposeful vigour of a hypnotized butterfly. "Man is perfected by his identity with the great Tao. Subsidiary to this he must have balanced perfectly the Yang and the Yin. Easier still is it to rule the sixfold star of Intellect; while for the base the control of the body and its emotions is the earliest step.

"Equilibrium is the great law, and perfect equilibrium is crowned by identity with the great Tao."

He emphasized this sublime assertion by a deliberate blow upon the protruding abdomen of the worthy Juju.

“Pray continue your honourable discourse!” exclaimed the half-awakened Daimio.

Kwaw went on, and I think it only fair to say that he went on for a long time, and that because you have been fool enough to read thus far, you have no excuse for being fool enough to read farther.

“Phenacetin is a useful drug in fever, but woe to that patient who shall imbibe it in collapse. Because calomel is a dangerous remedy in appendicitis, we do not condemn its use in simple indigestions.

“As above so beneath! said Hermes the thrice greatest. The laws of the physical world are precisely paralleled by those of the moral and intellectual sphere. To the prostitute I prescribe a course of training by which she shall comprehend the holiness of sex. Chastity forms part of that training, and I should hope to see her one day a happy wife and mother. To the prude equally I prescribe a course of training by which she shall comprehend the holiness of sex. Unchastity forms part of that training, and I should hope to see her one day a happy wife and mother.

“To the bigot I commend a course of Thomas Henry Huxley; to the infidel a practical study of ceremonial magic. Then, when the bigot has knowledge and the infidel faith, each may follow without prejudice his natural inclination; for he will no longer plunge into his former excess.

“So also she who was a prostitute from native passion may indulge with safety in the pleasure of love; she who was by nature cold may enjoy a virginity in no wise marred by her disciplinary course of unchastity. But the one will understand and love the other.

“I have been taxed with assaulting what is commonly known as virtue. True; I hate it, but only in the same degree as I hate what is commonly known as vice.

“So it must be acknowledged that one who is but slightly unbalanced needs a milder correction than whoso is obsessed by prejudice. There are men who make a fetish of cleanliness; they shall work in a fitter’s shop, and learn that dirt is the mark of honourable toil. There are those whose lives are rendered wretched by the fear of infection; they see bacteria of the deadliest sort in all things but the actual solutions of carbolic acid and mercuric chloride with which they hysterically combat their invisible foemen; such would I send to live in the bazaar at Delhi, where they shall happily learn that dirt makes little difference after all.

“There are slow men who need a few months’ experience of the hustle of the stockyards; there are business men in a hurry, and they shall travel in Central Asia to acquire the art of repose.

“So much for the equilibrium, and for two months in every year each member of your governing classes shall undergo this training under skilled advice.

“But what of the Great Tao? For one month in every year each of these men shall seek desperately for the Stone of the Philosophers. By solitude and fasting for the social and luxurious, by drunkenness and debauch for the austere, by scourging for those afraid of physical pain, by repose for the restless, and toil for the idle, by bull-fights for the humanitarian, and the care of little children for the callous, by rituals for the rational, and by philosophy for the credulous, shall these men, while yet unbalanced, seek to attain to unity with the great Tao. But for those whose intellect is purified and co-ordinated, for those whose bodies are in health, and whose passions are at once eager and controlled, it shall be lawful to choose their own way to the One Goal; *videlicet*, identity with that great Tao which is above the antithesis of Yang and Yin.”

Even Kwaw felt tired, and applied himself to saké-and-soda. Refreshed, he continued: “The men who are willing by this means to become the saviours of their country shall be called the Synagogue of Satan, so as to keep themselves from the friendship of the fools who mistake names for things. There shall be masters of the Synagogue, but they shall never seek to dominate. They shall most carefully abstain from inducing any man to seek the Tao by any other way than that of equilibrium. They shall develop individual genius without considering whether in their opinion its fruition will tend to the good or evil of their country or of the world; for who are they to interfere with a soul whose balance has been crowned by the most holy Tao?

“The masters shall be great men among men; but among great men they shall be friends.

“Since equilibrium will have become perfect, a greater than Napoleon shall arise, and the peaceful shall rejoice thereat; a greater than Darwin, and the minister in his pulpit give open thanks to God.

“The instructed infidel shall no longer sneer at the church-goer, for he will have been compelled to go to church until he saw the good points as well as the bad; and the instructed devotee will no longer detest the blasphemers, because he will have laughed with Ingersoll and Saladin.

“Give the lion the heart of the lamb, and the lamb the force of the lion; and they will lie down in peace together.”

Kwaw ceased, and the heavy and regular breathing of Juju assured him that his words had not been wasted; at last that restless and hurried soul had found supreme repose.

Kwaw tapped the gong. “I have achieved my task,” said he to the obsequious majordomo, “I pray leave to retire from the Presence.” “I beg your excellency to follow me,” replied the gorgeous functionary, “his lordship has commanded me to see that your holiness is supplied with everything that you desire.” Then the sage laughed aloud.

IV

任 信 (“THINGS TO BE BELIEVED.”)

SIX months passed by, and Juju, stirring in his sleep, remembered the duties of politeness, and asked for Kwaw.

“He is on your lordship’s estate at Nikko,” the servants hastened to reply, “and he has turned the whole place completely upside down. Millions of yen have been expended monthly; he has even mortgaged the very palace in which your lordship has been asleep; a body of madmen has seized the reins of government—”

“The Synagogue of Satan!” gasped the outraged Daimio.

“—And you are everywhere hailed as the Godfather of your country!”

“Do not tell me that the British war has ended disastrously for us!” and he called for the elaborate apparatus of hari-kiri.

“On the contrary, my lord, the ridiculous Sa Mon, who would never go to sea because he was afraid of being sick, although his genius for naval strategy had no equal in the Seven Abysses of Water, after a month as stowaway on a fishing boat (by the orders of Kwaw) assumed the rank of Admiral of the Fleet, and has inflicted a series of complete and crushing defeats upon the British Admirals, who though they had been on the water all their lives, had incomprehensibly omitted to acquire any truly accurate knowledge of the metaphysical systems of Sho Pi Naour and Ni Tchze.

“Again, Hu Li, the financial genius, who had hitherto been practically useless to his country on account of that ugliness and deformity which led him to shun the society of his fellows, was compelled by Kwaw to exhibit himself as a freak. A fortnight of this cured him of shyness; and within three months he has nearly doubled the revenue and halved the taxes. Your lordship has spent millions of yen; but is to-day a richer man than when your excellency went to sleep.”

“I will go and see this Kwaw,” said the Daimio. The servants then admitted that the Mikado in person had been waiting at the palace door for over three months, for the very purpose of begging permission to conduct him thither, but that he had been unwilling to disturb the sleep of the Godfather of his country.

Impossible to describe the affecting scene when these two magnanimous beings melted away (as it were) in each other’s arms.

Arrived at the estate of Juju at Nikko, what wonder did these worthies express to see the simple means by which Kwaw had worked his miracles! In a glade of brilliant cherry and hibiscus (and any other beautiful trees you can think of) stood a plain building of stone, which after all had not cost millions of yen, but a very few thousands only. Its height was equal to its breadth, and its length was equal to the sum of these, while the sum of these three measurements was precisely equal to ten times the age of Kwaw in units of the span of his hand. The walls were tremendously

thick, and there was only one door and two windows, all in the eye of the sunset. One cannot describe the inside of the building, because to do so would spoil the fun for other people. It must be seen to be understood, in any case; and there it stands to this day, open to anybody who is strong enough to force in the door.

But when they asked for Kwaw, he was not to be found. He had left trained men to carry out the discipline and the initiations, these last being the chief purpose of the building, saying that he was homesick for the lions and lizards of Wei-Hai-Wei, and that anyway he hadn't enjoyed a decent swim for far too long.

There is unfortunately little room for doubt that the new and voracious species of sharks (which Japanese patriotism had spent such enormous sums in breeding) is responsible for the fact that he has never again been heard of.

The Mikado wept; but, brightening up, exclaimed: "Kwaw found us a confused and angry mob; he left us a diverse, yet harmonious, republic; while let us never forget that not only have we developed men of genius in every branch of practical life, but many among us have had our equilibrium crowned by that supreme glory of humanity, realization of our identity with the great and holy Tao."

Wherewith he set aside no less than three hundred and sixty-five days in every year, and one extra day every fourth year, as days of special rejoicing.

THE STONE
OF THE PHILOSOPHERS WHICH IS HIDDEN IN THE MOUNTAIN
OF
ABIEGNUS

“And a certain woman cast a piece of a mill stone upon Abimelech, and all to brake his skull.”—ANON.

“Whosoever shall fall upon this stone shall be broken; but upon whomsoever it shall fall, it will grind him to power.”—ANON.

“Qu’est-ce donc, en verité, que ce pierre? C’est le fondement de la philosophie absolue, c’est le suprême et inébranlable raison.”—LEVI.

“One day when I was all alone
I found a wondrous little stone.
It lay forgotten on the road
Far from the ways of man’s abode.
When on this stone mine eyes I cast
I saw my Treasure found at last.
—O Stone, so red and rare and wise!
O fragment of far Paradise!”

MACHEN

THE STONE

OF THE PHILOSOPHERS WHICH IS HIDDEN IN

ABIEGNUS

THE ROSICRUCIAN MOUNTAIN OF INITIATION

HOLBEIN HOUSE suggests rather Hogarth. It is one of those sordid barracks where the Martinet of Realism, Society, pens his privates. Whoso sees an inhabitant thereof thenceforward for ever must believe in the predestination of the damned. Are we so far progressed as to interpret the saying “The Englishman’s home is his castle” in the light of the fact that once a man lay dead in his room for seven weeks, all undisturbed?

Thus far the Socialist. To him enter a Man. Sayeth, the fate of men is naught; we measure mountain ranges by their peaks, not by their plains. And forthwith the man must seek in Holbein House for some crown of the age, some Venus floating new-born in that Dead Sea, some God new-lit upon that Limbo. As also it is written.

We follow him to its smallest garret, deserted by the rats, since they found nor room nor victual, but tenanted by men. Arthur Gray was a poet who had abandoned alike his father’s favour and his jam factory. Caring for nothing but his books, he lived in Holbein House, year in, year out. Looking at the blank wall opposite, he had seen God face to face, and died. When he spoke he was not understood, for his words were the words of a dead God.

Basil Gray, his brother, had come hot-foot from West Africa to see him. Basil had just made the great march from Tetuan to Lagos, and the love of his only brother burnst strong in him, and the hunger for his face.

Basil, looking upon the blind face of the desert, his body withered in the furnace of the sand, had seen God face to face, and died.

Basil spoke, therefore, as a dead God speaks, and only children understood him.

At Gibraltar, on the way home, he had fallen in with Denzil Roberts, that foolish globe-trotter, secularist, and philanthropist-at-large. Denzil had just returned from a silly “sentimental journey” through Spain, and gazing on the sunset from the western tower of the Alhambra he had come nigh to seeing God.

Saddened and sane, he yet could recognize the magnificent insanity of Basil, and had come home with him to learn the way to the gate that men call Madness.

The fourth occupant of the room was Arthur’s oldest friend—nay, master.

Desperate research, life risked again and again in strange ways, incomprehensible to the swinish multitude, steady purpose ever equilibrating each thought with its opposite, had brought him at the end to the mastery of things.

So earnestly would he gaze on God, and die, that God had given him of His own life, and sent him among men.

But men knew him not. Only the babes could understand his strange grave smile.

The fifth man was a classical scholar; much learning had made him mad. Yet, well as he knew Greek and Latin, he had not yet read enough to see therein the luminous image of the Creator.

Last was a doctor who, gazing ever on madness, had himself become mad. He, too, saw God, but, being already mad, died not. Men thought they understood him, and for that reviled him. Being mad, he did not care.

All these men smoked heavily, and the silence of the world lay upon the,

It was only when the Man and the Socialist, invisibly seeking some pinnacle in the plains of Holbein House, as Sigiri springs from the table of the central province of Ceylon, came upon them, that their influence woke them into life.

I will cause them to converse, said the Man (who was the Devil), as it were to take you upon an high mountain and show you all the kingdoms of the earth. I have seen them, said the Socialist. But, said the Man, things look very different from that height.

Poverty and vice are the same from any point of view, began the Socialist.

Listen! said the other.

Arthur Gray stretched his legs as well as the room would allow. Master, your pipe is out. Read us that yarn of your turn-to with Asmodee in Scotland. If ever a place seemed to defy God, "it is this, it is this, it is this." Tune our instruments, master!

The big man put away his pipe. Your brother, he said, will recognise the title.

And clearing his throat, he began:

هو الله الذى لا الله الا هو

OR THE DEVIL'S CONVERSION

I SEE o' nights among the whins
The Devil walking widdershins
As stony silent as the Sphinx
I sit upon the sandy links,
And listen to the glittering spell
Of Asmodee the Goat of Hell.

He conjures up the nights of gray
And cardinal in Dahomey,
Where before kings and caboceers
The flaming cat of Hell appears;
Where witches whirl their flapping teats
Still shrieking to the drum that beats
Its monstrous call to flesh of man
Hissing and bubbling in the pan——
"Hua is God" it spelt to me;
"There is none other God than He."

He conjures up the seas that swell
 Before the hosts of Gabriel
 Between the Lights in Ibis flight
 Who whirls the Sword and Scales of Right.
 The tall ship strikes: the rending roar
 Of death devours the horrid war
 Where men dash women to the deck,
 Leave children wailing on the wreck. . . .
 Behold the lightning's jagged flash
 Spell out the signal with its lash——
 "Hua is God" (it tore the sea)
 "There is none other God than He."

He conjures up the greasy glare
 Of Rupert Street by Leicester Square
 Whose sodden slaves with sweat and paint
 Sicken the soul and make it gaint.
 Build of the slimy scales of vice
 One concentrated cockatrice!
 "Think!" laughs the devil,, "everywhere
 Is Rupert Street by Leicester Square."
 "True!" I replied, "it spells to me:
 There is none other God than He."

He conjures up the loathly rout
 Of Christians crawling in and out,
 A sight as lovely to the wise
 As maggots in a maiden's eyes.
 From chapel, church, and meeting-room
 From brothel, hospital, and tomb,
 From palace, gin-ship, workhouse, prison,
 Factory, slum, their slime is risen.
 The Devil said "Bestir thy wits!
 Spew out those dysenteric——" "It's
 A pity" (thus I cut him short)
 "Your boyhood was so badly taught.
 The riddle's simple—here's the key!
 There is none other God than He."
 He conjures up the Universe,
 Men bitter bad, and women worse.
 The whole disgusting Pan is shown,
 Filth from the spirit to the stone.
 "Read that!" he yelled. "Your eyeballs squint,
 But That is surely plain as print."
 "It is," I said, "for all to see——
 There is none other God than He."

And now the Devil strides and spins
 Most furiously widdershins,
 He causes two deceitful moons
 To dance upon the driving dunes.
 "If all's illusion, gentle youth,
 All is the enemy of Truth.
 Where are you now?" "My worthy friend!"
 (I answered) "take it to the end.
 I do not think you prove it quite
 That truth and lies are opposite.
 But upon This we can agree:
 There is none other God than He."

He wrote in flame upon the grass
 "This person is a perfect ass."
 He vanished in a cloud of musk.
 He sent the demons of the dusk
 To ramp and rage about the links
 To tease me—Me, the stony Sphinx!
 I smiled; I bent them to my will;
 I set them dancing deosil,
 And singing with seraphic glee
 "There is none other God than He."

The devil saw that he had failed,
 He came back very draggel-tailed;
 And, poised above me in the air,
 Whined "Mr. Sphinx, now, is it fair?
 My business is to rack the bones
 Of saints like you and Mr. Jones!
 I'm paid to accuse the brethren, sir!"
 "I do not blame you, Lucifer.
 I take my pleasure in your frown
 Because you 'represent the Crown.'
 And all your prattle means to me:
 There is none other God than He."

The Devil seemed to see the point.
 Pleased that I did not say "Aroint!"
 Pleased that in Asmodee I sight
 Brave Lucifer, the Lord of Light,
 Pleased with my Qabalistic pun
 (Really a very clever one!),
 Accepted all and none; became
 A perfect vessel of the Flame.
 He flapped his crooked and gloomy wing
 And swore by God the Holy King

That all his malice should confine
 Itself to this one sin of mine
 And this alone, when neophytes
 (Confused by the excess of lights)
 Perceive not what they ought to see:
 "There is none other God than He."
 Oh how the good converted Fiend
 Worries those Postulants unweaned!
 Though now he dances deosil
 He poinds them many a purging pill.
 He cleans them from their piggish food;
 He brings them to beatitude.
 "Hua is God!" quoth Asmodee:
 "There is none other God than He."

A silence ensued. At last, from Denzil: you mean very much what the Hindus mean by their doctrine of Maya?

Exactly so; but of course they cannot mean what they say. The thinkable is false. All our attempts to crystallize Truth in words are just as futile as the trickery by which the artist gets his sunlight effects with some dull ochre. The impression's good enough, maybe, at a distance, as an impression. Examine it close: it goes. God sees the clever composition; man sees the untidy brushwork. So logic destroys our religions, despite their truth.

But, said Denzil, surely it is better to get nearer truth. I hate all the evil that religion has wrought. As I looked on Granada and its cathedral, this is what I thought. Can you blame me?

And from a little leathern pocket-book he began to read these lines:

ON A PROSPECT OF GRANADA CATHEDRAL FROM THE ALHAMBRA

BROWN bloated toad that squatstest in the sun!
 Loose thankless mouth whose greed is never done!
 Old spider waiting with thy web aspin
 Till all Granada thou hast gathered in!
 The blood of bulls and goats would satisfy
 Of old the hellish thirst of the Most High.
 Well—at the worst Jehovah's altars smoke
 And hiss with flesh of his own favoured folk.
 But Thou, O Christ, dost glut thy lust refined
 Upon the ravaged souls of all mankind.

An excellent photograph, said the big man. My own words just now were as strong, I think. Yet the one answer answers all.

Arthur Grey broke in. You should hear the whole story, he said. Look at the inmost as well as the middle. Under correction, sir (politely to the doctor), I find that human

beauty fades if we dissect the body. Yet your microscopist (in the first place) will find the detail of blood beautiful, just as I its banners in my lady's face. And in the second place, does the dissection table reveal all? Is there no spirit, lovely even to me, of which my lady's bones and nerves are but the weak expression?

So strongly do I agree with you, returned the madman, that I have written a poem on the unattractive subject of ovariectomy. It must not shock you; I am mad, and claim the immunities of my limitations. I say nothing of your spirit theory; to me, ignorant as I am, it seems easier to call a nerve God and so explain its functions, than to imagine a God using that nerve as an instrument. We can kill a nerve; can we then baulk God of His effects? This is no less blasphemous than to say we kill God when we cut the nerve. If a man understand not his brother whom he hath seen, how shall he understand God whom he hath not seen? Materialism is fertile, though it lead to its opposite. Theism is sterile. How would you treat an engine-driver who tried to make his engine go by prayer and philosophy? But I am mad. Here is my poem, then.

Having the memory of a madman, he recited it by heart.

OVARIOTOMY

I LOVE you, lass, and you alone.

What shall I say now death and life
Wrangle before the jasper throne
And cry to God to end the strife?

Kind words? a little good advice?

Patience, and fortitude, and prayer?
Tracts are so suitable, and nice?

"Dear chyild, there'll be no parting there!"?

O bourgeoisie! you read no doubt,

But you still have a lot to learn.

I am a lover, not a lout

My thoughts take quite another turn.

I who have bitten through your skin

Envy the surgeon who could dip

His deft and conscious fingers in

Your bowels, and twitch a scornful lip.

I would have paddled in you, played

Childlike and cloudless of your pain.

I would have kissed the wound, and made

A pleasant ripple in your brain.

Within the startling lovlier mouth

New-cut my brother torch should flare

And pour to ease its awful drouth

The poison of a Baudelaire.

O fool! not thus the Intimate
Gives up its secret to the soul.
Truth fled beyond, inviolate
And slips beside the glancing goal.

Who probes the body gains a fact,
Yet leaves an equal fact behind;
So gathering for the cataract
Roll up the rapid waves of mind.

Swift as the light at last they leap
Into the cavern of despair;
Of all their freshest force they keep
But froth and smoke and empty air.

O fool! to deem dissection truth
And paint and patches but a blind!
The enthusiasm of a youth
Is worth the sage and cynic mind.

O Buddha! couldst thou nowhere rest
A pivot for the universe?
Must all things be alike confessed
Mere changes rung upon a curse?

I swear by all the bliss of blue
My Phryne with her powder on
Is just as false—and just as true—
As your disgusting skeleton.

Each to his taste: if you prefer
This loathy brooding on Decay,
I call it Growth, and lovelier
Than all the glammers of the day.

Which of us likes his house the best?
You who find filth on every floor?
I, in the privy who attest
A something worthy to adore?

The end is—you are always sick;
You always quarrel with your meat.
My raptures follow fast and thick:
I even tend to overeat.

You would not dally with Doreen
Because her fairness was to fade,
Because you knew the things unclean
That go to make a mortal maid.

I, if her rotten corpse were mine,
 Would take it as my natural food,
 Denying all but the Divine
 Alike in evil and in good.

Aspasia may skin me close,
 And Lais load me with disease.
 Poor pleasures, bitter bargains, those?
 I still despise Diogenes.

Why must the prig be still the judge?
 The Deadly-Livelies audit life?
 Ask of the drone about the drudge!
 Compute the mistress by the wife!

Why? Because Jesus helps them to!
 Converted William snubs the King.
 No doubt the soapy godly crew
 Can turn their hands to anything!

Alas! the days of Christ are gone:
 The callous King supports the snub:
 Campaspe's lips gush Lethe on
 The schoolboy-trickset in the Tub.

O restless rats that gnaw the bones
 Of Aristophanes and Paul!
 Come up to me and Mr. Jones
 And see the rapture of it all!

This moral sense is sorry stuff——
 You take the peas—give me the pod!
 Follow your fancy far enough!
 At last you surely come to God.

Who is Mr. Jones? asked Denzil. We have heard of him from our friend here already.

Mr. Jones, said the big man, is the Unutterable Tao.

Mr. Jones, said the doctor, is (on this illusory plane of Maya) one of the wonders of the world. He is never seen or heard, felt or smelt. Nor hath he been at any time tasted of any. Yet he is everywhere; in all, and causer of all, and apart from all. By profession he is a curator at the British Museum; but that is going very low indeed upon the plane of Maya.

I have already told you, said the big man, that Mr. Jones is the Unutterable Tao. Why not leave it at that?

I will, said Basil, if Arthur will read us something. I know what he was leading up to when our friend—played with his opponent's ball.

A brother is a dreadful handicap! sighed Arthur. Still, here you are!

And he read:

THE WIFE-BEATER

I BRUISED your body with the whip
Its wheals stand out in ridgéd azure.
The savage blood upon your lip
Images hurt, and hurt's erasure.

The pain transmuted into passion;
And passion's ruin was not pain;
But my pain wears another fashion;
My dead men do not rise again.

You hurt me, and the silent skin
Whispers no word of bleeding bruises;
Your subtle hate, your cunning skin
Brands and corrodes me where it chooses

I fear not them that kill the body,
But rather them that hurt the soul:
My soul with your disdain is bloody;
Your stripes are none to make me whole.

Could you but see my vitals torn,
My nerves on rack, my tortured spirit—
Of all the ills to mortals born
This is the sorest to inherit.

If you could see the branded token
Of your invisible whip, the scars
Of your intangible knife, the unspoken
Agonies, silent as the stars!

Then you should count the agéd lines
That wrinkle up my boy's blithe beauty:—
The Judge of all the Earth divines
My wrongs and yours, and does his duty.

For you in heaven shall bloom and burgeon,
And I in hell shall howl and groan.
Ah! God is an unskilful surgeon;
We both shall weep to be alone!

For we are one and may not part;
And though we hurt, we love, believe me!
Nor would I in my inmost heart
Of one of all your stabs bereave me.

No man can hurt the indifferent stranger,
 No woman wound the casual friend.
 There is a glory born of danger;
 What anger gat, desire may end.

Give me the phrenzy of your lip!
 My heart accepts your usurpature.
 Your body leaps beneath the whip;
 Our pain is in love's very nature.

It is enough. The woe is over,
 The woe begins; the vial brims,
 And all the anguish of your lover
 And you is hidden in wrestling limbs.

Drain the black cup of bruised blood!
 Its bitter shall beget devotion,
 And Bacchus sweep its frenzied flood
 Into the Eleusinian ocean!

Certainly, the plane is very low indeed. We hardly came here to learn that! said Basil indignantly. We all know that cold-blooded murder (even) may become a duty—witness Hodson and the pistolling of the Delhi Princes!

His brother laughed: I don't know about duty, but to murder *you* in cold blood would be a pleasure.

Dear old chap! responded Basil, with a warm pressure of the hand. Open the whisky, and you'll feel better!

Which being gone about, the irrepressible doctor broke in with a story of his youth.

I will never assent to murder, said he. It's inartistic. I dined forty years ago in the Apennines with an Italian Prince, and he entirely converted me. I put down his words in verse. They are being published by the Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment. If a supreme aesthete like the Prince botches it (this is their idea) how much more must we detest the crude melodramas of the Law! The proceeds are to be devoted to the artistic education of the Common Hangman—as a palliative measure.

Wiertz and Beardsley, Sime and O'Sullivan? suggested the Scholar, separating his fingers widely to illustrate his "Three fingers only, please!" to their host.

Now, doctor, said Basil, your Italian Prince!

THE DISAPPOINTED ARTIST

SHALL we sit here? A lovely night!—
 What you were saying, though, is right:
 Man scorns repulsion and attraction;
 Woman is wholly reflex action.—
 I'll tell you of a splendid joke
 I had once. Have another smoke?

No? Well. I wanted to determine
 Rightly the nature of the vermin.
 (A pity scientific study
 Makes the hands poisonous and bloody!)

You seen yon finger chaste and cool
 That moonlight flings across the pool?
 It seems to tempt a man to swim.
 I have as sharp and straight and slim
 A blade whose glamour makes one reel
 And dazzles death upon the steel.
 Oh! the stiletto! supple joy—
 As if some soft Italian boy
 With all his slender strength alive
 Laughed in a deep Narcissus dive.

I used to poise its light aloft
 Above Carlotta sleepy-soft.
 The dusky gold enamoured eyes
 And bloom of down would harmonzie.
 She used to scold it in pretence
 Of envy of its excellence.
 We laughed—but not at the same joke.
 All girls are blind with their own smoke.
 A man may come, his lazy day,
 Cuddle and coo an hour away,
 Yet in his heart is bound to feel:
 “No woman’s worth an inch of steel.”

Woman has always played the sphinx.
 An open secret! How the minx
 Covers her single aim, poor saint!
 With many a foxy futile feint.
 The same thing civilized or wild:
 “I want a man: I want a child.”

Man has a real secret—kept
 Close as a Rosy Cross adept!
 The safer that the sapient sheep
 Have never guessed he’d one to keep.
 Unveil the Pyramid of Stone!
 He simply wants to be alone.

Women suspect it. Tell one that
 To change her to a frenzied cat!
 ’Tis the one cliff where all their waves
 Break back to spurned and shattered graves.

A man (at heart they're well aware)
May love, maybe! can never care.

I bore you with an old fool's prosing?
No? I was right, then, in supposing
Modern conditions hamper youths
Who seek to grasp these simply Truths.

But to my yarn. Carlotta lay
So sleepy-soft one summer's day
That really I could not resist it.
I took the dagger out and kissed it.
Like a cat's tongue that daintily laps,
I slipped it in between her paps.

At first, of course, the shrieking swerves
One's thought: it irritates the nerves;
And out of tone the laughter lies
At the poor innocent's surprise.
But soon there triumphs cool and clean
The touching pathos of the scene.
No word of anger, be assured!
A strange soft wonder, long immured
Within her, lit her lovely face
With something of Our Lady's grace.
"What did you kill me for, my Lord?"
As if my answer must accord
With some most lucid miracle
Of love too sweet to think or tell.
"Kiss me again before I die!"
And, as I kissed her, tenderly
Shone like pale flames the sullen spheres
Of dewy light, of eager tears.
She touched my soul's divinest chord:
"I am so happy, dear my Lord."
And, breaking to the spirit bliss,
"I go, dear. O so keen to kiss
Our baby when I get to God!"

Charming! Why, damn it now! that's odd.
I'm surely in my dotage, Dick!
A sniveller makes me fairly sick.
—Well, here's the Devil in Eden still;
No good we do but turns to ill:
Art's but a crust o'er nature's chasms.
Death caught her with his comic spasms.
They turned her fairly inside out,

Jerking her legs and arms about
Like a damned dancing marionette.

I could not light my cigarette:
I started laughing. Laugh? I laughed—
I rocked my body fore and aft—
I fairly yelled! To crown the event
Her wonder at my merriment:
That beat the band. I really wonder
However I came to, by thunder!—
Ha! Ha! You hear—it somehow jars.
Bad art, my boy! The Devil mars
Our best. You want a tender gray,
Prepare your palette half the day,
Take brush, and find to your surprise
The snout of scarlet stab your eyes.
Bad art, my boy! I never cared
To try the piece again.

—We've aired
Our dinner. By the way, though, here
You are. That's it! How smooth and clear
The moonlight runs from point to hilt!
Steel in the end beats silver-gilt!
Well, there's an end of my cigar:
The girls will wonder where we are.

Strange! how this question of motive deceives historians—and others! said the scholar. Froude was hardly a fool; but his Henry the Eighth is incredible. So is the conventional monster. I for one shall not be surprised at the Day of Judgement to here that the Constantine of Protestantism was actuated by some quite simple motive like suppressed vegetarianism.

Very likely it never happened at all, said Denzil thoughtfully. Nothing ever did. Look at the Christ-myth. The Trial and Death and so on—mere stage-directions from a ritual of Mithraism. . . .

But who was Mithras? asked the big man. Like any other question, it goes on for ever, till you get to the big question.

With your answer to it, said Basil.

On the question of motive, though, said the Doctor, I like your theory of Messalina as an ascetic. Since the divine consciousness only appears as the negation of the human, and is only to be attained by wearing out all the sensation-points, till no response occurs to any stimulus—

Nonsense! interjected the big man, one can control them, not destroy them. Only morbid "Union with God" is attained by fast, vigil, scourging, and the like.

Morbid or no, continued the doctor, most saints have used this method. What I was about to say was that since we wish to overcome the body by fatigue, we shall do just as wisely to seek Union with God in excessive debauch. If done with the same purpose, and sleep successfully banished, the same result will occur. If your Messalina failed—well, what does the poet say? Try, try, try again! Read us your verses, Jack!

And with a disdainful glance at his clothes, as much as to say “Where’s my toga?” the scholar began:

THE RETURN OF MESSALINA

FROM the marsh of the Maremma the malaria is drawn
 By the gray and chilly breezes of the autumn and the dawn
 In the silence as we shiver who is yonder that we see
 With the hair fallen loose about her, with the stole about her knee?
 All her flesh is loose and fallen, and her eyes are wet and wild,
 And she staggers as she wallows like a woman big with child.
 How she gasps and stares about her! How she shivers! Are the hosts
 Of her lovers there to haunt her, life’s lupanar thick with ghosts?
 How her teeth are clenched with horror! How her lips are curled and wried
 As she staggers to the palace weary and unsatisfied!

Surely I have done the utmost! (all the demon in her wails)
 Is it spirit that disdains me? Is it only flesh that fails?
 Did Danae win to slumber at the thrust of griveous gold?
 Did the Bull bring Pasiphae to the palace of the cold?
 Could the sea avail to Sappho drifting dead upon the foam?
 What shall save me, Messalina, save the majesty of Rome?
 Shall I wreck my life with roses, hurt my flesh with flames and rods?
 All is vain!—for I have conquered both the mortals and the Gods.
 In the garden of Priapus, in the land of lost desire,
 I have made myself a monster and my soul a snake of fire.
 Ho! it stings me! Ho! it poisons! all the flesh is branded through,
 Branded with the steel of Vulcan, with the lava’s deadly dew.
 All the kisses of the satyr, all the punishments of Pan,
 All Eros hath given of arrows to the eyes of maid and man,
 At their lips and live I suffered—I have borne me as a queen:
 Hear the roar of after aeons that acclaim me Messaline!
 Woe is me! the waves of ages—icier, icier as they roll—
 May not cover up my stature, may not quench this devil-soul.

Here’s the palace. I must enter sly and secret as a thief.
 I would rather blazon, blazon, this my night beyond belief.
 I, a worn Suburrian Venus reeking with a fouler foam,
 Sucked within me in the darkness the virility of Rome.
 Now’s the light, the light accurséd: I must get me to the feast,
 Stupefy this Panic spirit, throw a posset to the beast.

—Hail, ye Gods! ye Gods infernal! here salutes ye Hercules!
 I am come to bring my spirit free of ye and forth of these.
 I am Orpheus! I will charm ye, bring Eurydice to light——
 Ah, my lords! Alas the omen! who shall turn me all to right?
 Who of all our proud Olympus shall avail me or befriend?
 Ah, my lords! but I am weary.

See ye any one the end?

Nay! we saw her grope and stumble for the secret sidelong door,
 Lift the latch with trembling fingers, pass within and be no more.
 There we stood and worshipped sadly (for the cry had touched us home),
 Worshipped till the gray was azure as the sun rekindled Rome.

You may be right, said Basil, in thinking as you evidently do that much of the ceremonial debauchery of the Pagan worships was a true mystical process. Indeed, at this day there are many cults in India (also, I believe, in the South Seas) of what is called Vamacharya. Religious frenzy is invoked by the aid of the Erotic and Bacchic frenzies mingled with that of the Muse of the Tom-Tom. Soma, bhang, arraq, and the Uniting of the Lingam and the Yoni! All, mind you, by a most elaborate ritual.

But, on the other hand, there is perfect purity of thought in much of the avowedly Phallic symbolism of the world. For just as the sexual pleasure is entirely in a class by itself among (or rather, above) physical pleasures; so is Samadhi—union with God—in a class by itself among (or rather, above) mental pleasures. Who, therefore, would make an hieroglyph of the latter formless ecstasy can do no better than by drawing a picture of the former, under the image of its physical instrument.

Hence the Rose and Cross, Sphinx and Pyramid, Sulphur and Salt, Black and White Pillars of the temple—in short, all the “pairs of opposites” in the world. (Politely, to the big man.) As you were saying just now.

Their literature? hinted the scholar.

Basil took up the glove. The Eastern is such a paradox that one hates to lay down the law. A Sufi (for example) no doubt writes erotic verse for the divine reason I have stated; but also, I believe him to be very glad of the excuse, because he is just as dirty-minded a beast as you and I.

I suspect the semi-erotic verse more than that which is untinctured. Why conceal your meaning under a symbol and then go on to explain it all? If language is valid, why use the symbol? If invalid, why use it at all?

Thus I can believe the Song of Solomon (unadulterated filth, with not a word about Yoga) to be a purely mystic treatise; but if the writer had inserted the inane “explanations” which pollute our Bibles—Christ and the Church, and that stuff—faugh!—I should certainly have thought he was trying to palm off his purulence under the guise of religion.

An Oriental Kensit! cried the scholar.

Just so, and the pious prurient would buy it and taboo “Dolores” added Arthur Gray.

Well, judge this! concluded Basil. It’s a pretty free adaptation from the Arabic—or what passes for Arabic in Marocco! he contemptuously added.

And diving into his shooting-jacket, he produced and read:

INSPIRATION

O DESERT sand! how still and prone the large-eyed boy upon thy breast
 Lies in El Maghrab’ in the West, and makes his low luxurious moan!
 How still the stars that watch above! how his lover, lapsed for joy
 To death upon the dying boy, the boy dissolved and lost in love!
 Even as a serpent in the grass their passion stole upon them there
 Within the warm ambrosial air, the intoxicating midnight mass.
 The pale boy lifted high the cup; the swarthy priest insanely poured
 That utmost unction of the Lord, that only Gods might drink it up.
 Wherefore indeed the holy Jinn that have embraced “addin Islam”
 Arose from their colossal calm, and smote the paramours of sin.
 Shrieking they fled, and all was still; the perfume of the place was spilt
 Even on the domes of ivory gilt that soar on Allah’s holy hill.
 I saw the threescore iron kings smite thrice upon the Burning Throne
 Till Mecca’s black enchaunted stone resolved the rapture of their wings.
 The proud Emirs bowed low before the awful fervour of the wind
 That rose their steely flight behind, and set him lion-like to roar.
 And as the Dervish howls and whirls its savour catches him and lifts
 His sould (beyond the mind that drifts) into the Treasure House of Pearls.
 Even to the icy solitude of death a gust of scent is borne
 An herald of the awaking morn to that unhappy brotherhood;
 An herald of the healing kiss of maids with eyes of white and black
 Whose heavenly kips shall woo them back into a bright eternal bliss.
 O laughter of delicious boys that bring the cup and pour the wine
 And with their rosy limbs entwine fresh garlands of mirific joys!

The boy is prone upon the stand; he lies as one who nestles in
 Some arbour delicate of sin built by the Everlasting Hand.
 His lover is the Open Eye, that kindles Light within the Abyss,
 And wakes with His immortal kiss enthusiastic energy.
 Weep Thou again, O weeping One! Thy tears that gush within the goal
 Are songs that shudder in the soul, and springs that gladden at the sun.
 They flood me with irradiate tunes of life and ecstasy and light
 As though some misty maid of night were girded with a million moons.
 They make my pulsing blood to pour in rhythmic throbs of music rare;
 My songs shall course the choral air from Mazaghan to Mogador.
 And leaping all the lesser bars I shall become the One and All,
 And cry the cross-dissolving call, and lose myself among the stars.

This is indeed paradox, cried the scholar. You embolden me to read my “Mask of Gilt.” I defy the subtlest of you to find a moral or a hieroglyph in it; so according to you it must be the only decent poem read yet.

You are itching to read it, said the big man, for you love the bestial. We are fairly trapped. Open the window, some one, and remember that He is God alone, and that there is none other God than He!

Right as usual, said the scholar. It’s a true story, in a way. I’ve seen the mask myself, and I believe it.

THE GILT MASK

IN Florence in the days of old there dwelt a craftsman pale and grim.
The Devil entered into him, and fanned his soul with plumes of gold.

He offered all he chose to ask. “O snatch this itching soul away,
So that thou animate my clay and finish me this magic mask!”

The Devil brought him graving tools; the first a ravening disease,
The cold corrupting masterpiece of Christ the god of weeping fools!

The second, bright as burning coal, a white and wanton wolf of sin
Who had an icy flame within the ulcer that she called her soul.

Long years he bent him to the task; he worked his torture and his lust
Out of the horror of the dust into the horror of the mask.

The mewling lecherous devils crept out of the strongholds of the hills,
And filled their blood with noisome thrills before the work of the adept.

The ghuls that gloat on corpses cold would gather, gluttoned with their meat,
And give it dead man’s chops to eat, and dead man’s bones to rub the gold;

While stinking goats and cats would come to link in infamies unheard;
While beat the witches oiled and furred their buttocks on the devil’s drum.

Yet still the dying craftsman strove to work his lust and pain within
The glittering avatar of sin that seemed to mock him as he wove.

At last his visage pale and grim lights with the laughter of the Pit.
The Devil comes and praises it, and lays a wreath of fire on him.

“Well hast thou wrought, O Florentine! Thy work hath gathered in its spell
The Daughters of the Lords of Hell, the Goddess-goats, the Women-swine!

“These shall adore it age by age; to these shall it give lust and force,
Absolve their spirits of remorse, and make them sage among the sage.

“Its eyes shall gleam when Borgia goes simpering to her stallion,
Her hair bedecked, her jewels on—to please her neighing, champing spouse.

“It shall smile loose on Katherine wallowing in the mire of blood,
Her lover’s cold congealing flood paying their silly hour of sin.

“Salammbô mated with an asp shall shudder at its leering face,
And kiss the gilded lips, and lace her serpent in a closer clasp.

“It shall inspire the dews of death that stand on Brinvilliers the smooth
And strangle all her woman’s ruth, envenoming the baby breath.

“It shall revolve to hellish bliss the water-torture and the wheel;
In all their pangs she shall not feel aught but my soul-devouring kiss.

“Its satyr lips shall writhe in prayer to nameless Nubian whores that mate
With swinish kisses to abate the black desire of Baudelaire.

“So after many a house of sin it finds at last a pungent home
Sweet as a poisoned honeycomb—a fairer fouler Katherine!

“With cooing laughter she shall press the monster to her golden teats,
Feed its desire on all her sweets with many a mesterufl caress.

“Its wisdom shall invigorate her soul to heights of hideous joy
To match her with the equal boy that shall be master of her fate.

“She shall attain a man to excel her strong satanic womanhood:
Their love shall break the mask of wood, reveal the authentic face of Hell.”

All this the craftsman heard with prinde: he called: his sickness and his whore
Together at his vitals tore, and rent him that he laughed and died.

So with the last convulsive shred of spending life, his fingers fold
So subtly on that face of gold that all its peace is perfected.

* * * * *

And there it hangs, a thought obscene, to haunt our love with damnéd ghosts—
Hark to their execrable hosts exulting as I kiss Katrine!

It conquers? We will show it things memorial of its splendours gone,
Things grosser than it looked upon where Neva rolls or Tiber swings.

We shall exceed: its lips unclean shall answer at the Judgement Day:
“The greatest of them all, I say, were this my poet and his queen!”

Ah, God! we look upon the Thames: the Arno’s palaces are gone.
Dull glows the misty horizon with London’s stinking stratagems.

But lift the lid of earth and see the good flame gush and wrap us round!
For us, the Gods of the Profound, may England equal Italy.

And I who revelled with Faustine in Rome make madder music here
Who poise upon my bleeding spear the severed kisses of Katrine.

I eat her flesh: I drink her blood. God! could I love a woman more
By Arno’s flower-enamelled shore, or Father Tiber’s tawny flood?

And reeking with her lusty life I hack the gilded mask and burn
With joy and hate. Aha! to turn to my own guts the glutton knife!

O Satan! stand morose and cold above our bodies swimming thus
And plunge thy glory into us, and fan our death with plumes of gold!

Write with our blood before thee spilt on catafalque and catacomb
The dire monition of our doom, the story of the Mask of Gilt.

The paradox *is* right, by Heaven! exclaimed the big man. That poem is bad enough, but a long explanation—*qui s'excuse s'accuse*. Better look for God in the filth itself than in the lame excuse for it!

I once knew people as mad as that, said the Doctor. They were all right; they knew their own business; but they were misunderstood—and they're in the Asylum at this minute.

Misunderstanding! said the big man; why *will* people try to judge others? I know less of my own brain—and *à fortiori* of my brother's—than I do of an oyster. Yet I try to instruct my brother, and let the oyster gang his ain gait.

Read that jest of yours about the Qabalistic Rabbi! said Arthur.

I will. He was the dearest old man in the world; absolutely incapable of doing anything to shock the most puritanical. Yet his curious studies in the Zohar got him a reputation unfit even to speak of.

He was too innocent to guess what trouble he was making! Let it be a warning to us!

So he read:

THE RABBI MISUNDERSTOOD

“TEMURAH tells us—praise to Adonai!”
Rabbi Mephibosheth Ben Mordecai
Was wont to say, “that the Adepti see
 $S_a-M_a-D_{hi}$ equalized with $S_o-D_o-M_y$.
That transcends Short o' Face and Longnose both:
This is the deepest den of the Qliphoth.
Match them! the Tree of Life in Eden Bower
Grows balanced perfectly from root to flower.”
—This may be why the Reverend Mrs. Grundy
Called him a sodomite the other Sunday.

Good! chuckled Basil, when they had done laughing. If he'd worked that out as a boy, his alleged character might have forced him to its own path.

When I was in Marrakesh, the lynched a poor old man because their mosque had been defiled in some real and imaginary way (with which he had in any case nothing to do, having been paralyzed for years). The excuse was, on the soles of his feet the creases formed the word Allah, so that he always trod upon the name of God! They killed Burckhardt for that, by the way. A pure invention in both instances. I saw his feet, and they were just like anybody else's, only dirtier.

Poverty and paralysis were *his* crimes, I warrant ye, my masters! Anyway, it was a great joke, and I made a splendid Arabian Tale of it.

Read it! was the chorus.

Which he did.

THE MOSQUE BEWITCHED

AN aged sorcerer there dwelt within the town of Marrakesh
The fangs of Hell in life who felt twitching his soul out through the flesh.

Though not originally bad his moral ruin was complete:
His pious parents said he had the devil's claw-marks on his feet.

An outward wart upon the nose spells inward malice in the gizzard.
The path is easy, I suppose, for such an one to play the wizard.

In any case he took the risk, and left off things like soap and eating,
Till he could give the world a bisque, ten spells in thirty, and a beating.

Well at the age of eighty-eight he found himself the One-horse Wire
For the Jehannum Maiden Plate—by Satan, out of Lake o' fire.

So, calling Iblis of the Jinn (a god among the damnéd Ghebers!)
He offered up a final sin to play a last joke on the neighbours.

The deed was signed in fire and blood; and ere the morn was dewy wet
An hog for the Muezzin upstood, and chanted from the Minaret.

"There is no God! no God! (he sware) Mohammed was a charlatan!
Sleep is more excellent than prayer! and pork is pleasant in the pan!"

The elders knew that only one could crack such execrable quips.
They hurried off to have the fun of slicing him in little strips.

But Iblis met him with a grin worth ninety-nine per cent. per annum.
"You've missed the fun—but pray walk in!—we're off this minute to Jehannum!"

In sooth, the fiend's unseemly mirth moked all their wagging beard alike,
As from the bowels of the earth quacked an ironical "Labbaik!"

The moral is—if all your folk are sure you are a black magician
You may as well enjoy the joke; you cannot damage your position.

The moral is—when mothers crossed perform the usual Christian revel
And tell their children they are "lost," they simply drive them to the devil.

What's "Labbaik"? asked Denzil.

The pious "Adsum" of the Pilgrim when he reaches the holy ground of Mecca. So
you may imagine the horror of the Muslim on hearing it float cheerfully up from Hell!

Talking of Black Magic, said the big man, the belief in it is probably as strong as ever.
I myself am inclined to laugh: "Who believes in Black Magic proves himself to be
bewitched!" I had a horrible case of it once—I shudder yet!

I could imagine the time when my poor friend's disease was epidemic; when the panic
madness seized even on the government——

I hae my doots! said the scholar. Popular beliefs furnish convenient stalking-horses for political suberfuge.

No! said the Doctor. Diseases of the mind as well as that of the body attack all classes. While man is as subject to suggestion as he is, the simulation of belief is almost surrender to the belief itself. Constantine probably became a real Christian in the end.

Tell us about your friend, though! from Basil.

“I hitched it into verse and good,” said the big man. But as it’s a tale with a moral, please imagine yourselves to be a set of children. I wrote it for them. Here goes!

THE SUSPICIOUS EARL

There was a poor bedevilled Earl
 Who saw a Witch in every girl,
 A Wehr-wolf every time one smiled,
 A budding Vampire in a child,
 A Sorcerer in every man,
 A deep-laid Necromantic plan
 In every casual word; withal
 Cloaked in its black horrific pall
 A Vehmgericht obscenely grim,
 And all designed—to ruin him!

He saw in every passer-by
 Black Magic and the Evil Eye,
 Interpreting the simplest act
 As being a Satanic Pact.
 Of course at times there were a few
 In some sort victims of the crew;
 For when his Countess coughed or sneezed,
 “Obsessed!” the poor old fellow wheezed.

He sought the Mighty Powers of Good,
 Invoked the Great White Brotherhood.
 Like smart and punctual business men,
 They sent a man round there and then.
 How gladly reverent doth he greet
 The sage’s venerable feet!

But in a while suspicion grows.
 “This fellow, now, by Jove, who knows?
 Perhaps he too is in the Plot.
 I like Scotch Whisky: he does not.
 He prefers Job to Second Kings.
 We disagree on many things.”

He sniffed around the Adept (who lay low).
 He searched his luggage for his halo.
 He asked him frequently to dine
 Forgetting purposely the wine
 (Though the arcana of Nibbana
 Ignore the very name of Cana).
 He could not pass a herd of swine
 Without a hint; in fact, in fine,
 He took His Silence as a sign:
 "This is an Enemy of mine!"

To cut the story short, we skip
 A year or two, and in we chip
 (Invigorated by our rest)
 Just where the jury at the 'Quest
 At the Asylum duly find
 "Suicide while of Unsound Mind."

This time we skip from earth to heaven
 God stands among the Spirits Seven.
 The Seven Lamps about Him flame.
 Myriad Archangels cry His name.
 Millions of elders, prophets, preachers,
 Saints, martyrs, virgins, hermits, teachers,
 Angels, evangelists, apostles
 All singing like a lot of throistles
 All out of tune with one another,
 And every one a Plymouth Brother,
 With praise set heaven in a whirl.
 Up slinks the poor bedevilled Earl,
 Saved after all! The grateful tears
 Course down his cheek for several years.
 But when he pulls himself together
 And gets accustomed to the weather
 He wants to poke his fingers in
 To see if God is genuine.
 Too soon he stripped (this cunning clod!)
 Gilt off the gingerbread of God;
 And sipping his nepenthe clear,
 Sniffed "Bah! plain gin and gingerbeer"
 —That night he happened to be sick:
 "Poisoned," he yelled, "with Arsenic!"

He left—his boomerang suspicions
 Created hosts of Black Magicians.
 His leaky lorship they annoyed
 All through the immeasurable void

—Until his pallid voice confessed
Himself in league with all the rest.

(The breathless children round me crowd.
I pause. At last one says aloud:
“But tell us how he got to glory!”
—I’m very sorry. That’s the story.

But what’s the moral? asks a big
Girl with the makings of a prig.
First. Golf is long, and life is fleeting:
Only one Bogey is worth beating.
Moral the Second (Quiet, girls!)
A sane square is worth ten mad earls.
And, most important, Number Three:
Every one must trust somebody.)

You do well to treat it lightly, said Basil. It’s the most terrible story I ever heard. A
fico for your tragedies of blood and bones!

Indeed, ’tis the one hopeless hell, added the Scholar. It is true? You knew the man?
I did, returned the big man. As nice a fellow as you could find in three continents.
And lost! lost! lost!

Oh! when will men be free of all this superstition? groaned Denzil.

Never, said the Scholar.

Now, said the big man.

I can’t see it, cried Denzil, but it shall be! it shall be! And he rolled off this great oath:

I SWEAR by all the stars that stream
Through all the lofty leaves of night:
I swear by the tremendous towers
That crown Granda’s vale of flowers:
I swear by their impending gleam,
The Sierra’s snowy swords of light!
By all the cruel and cold despair
That Christ hath brought upon the land:
By Mary and the false blind beastly
Lies of the prudish and the priestly:
By God and death and hate I swear
That man shall rise, shall understand.
I swear by this my lucid Eye
By all the freedom I have won,
That men shall learn to love and doubt,
Put faith and slavery to the rout,
And eagle-pinioned even as I
Soar to the splendour of the sun!

All right! all right! said the doctor, rather testily. But you want everybody to use your methods. Hurrah for Huxley! Down with Jesus! By heaven, your tyranny will soon be as bad as that of Rome or Geneva. Every man must find his own way to freedom.

Let me read to you about my mad friends. One of the most interesting cases of symbolic coitus I know of. The man wasn't of the hunting class; he was a head waiter, child of some Russian exiles of the so-called student persuasion, and his only notions of fox-hunting were taken from the Christmas numbers of the illustrated papers of his childhood.

Strange how things stick!

THE SYMBOLISTS

TITAN EVE was thewed and sinewed: all the blood of Mother Earth
Sang within her veins and gave her all the might of all her girth.
Vladimir was small and dainty like a fairy knight to brand
Greener circles with his dancing on the green enamoured land.
Strange that in the silent city, Eve should play the horsing mare,
Eve should whinny for a stallion, snuffing up the scented air;
Strange that breeched and scarlet-coated, brave with wealth of boot and spur,
He should hunt the fox Jehovah through the world astride of her.
But his whip! the flame that lashes blood from out her flanks afoam,
Strips the flesh and leaves the spirit bridle-free to gallop home!
But the screams of pain that stab him, drunk with lust of spur and rod,
As the rowels and the whalebone send his spirit back to God!

So in madness is attainment that inspirits and endures.
—Who are you to blame their folly, ask them to assent to yours?
Be ye sure, the Eye Unlidded measures by another rod!
Be ye sure, the human balance looks distorted to a God!
To yourselves be slaves and masters; stand or fall to self alone;
Human ethics will not loosen our Astarte's crimson zone.
You will never fit your forehead with your father's fancy hats:
You know more about salvation than the Reverend Robert Rats.

Well, you have most certainly met an unpleasant set of people, exclaimed the big man. Can't we be a bit cheerful for a change? The night wears on: we must part.

I think you would like my Gipsy girl, said Denzil, without scruple or diffidence.

If she's a sane clean human being, we shall. So Arthur Gray voiced the general feeling.

Without further debate he set to.

LA GITANA

YOUR hair was full of roses in the dewfall as we danced,
 The sorceress enchanting and the paladin entranced,
 In the starlight as we wove us in a web of silk and steel
 Immemorial as the marble in the halls of Boabdil,
 In the pleasaunce of the roses with the fountains and the yews
 Where the snowy Sierra soothed us with the breezes and the dews!
 In the starlight as we trembled from a laugh to a caress
 And the god came warm upon us in our pagan allegresse.
 Was the Baile de la Bona too seductive? Did you feel
 Through the silence and the softness all the tension and the steel?
 For your hair was full of roses, and my flesh was full of thorns
 And the midnight came upon worth a million crazy morns.
 Ah! my Gipsy, my Gitana, my Saliya! were you fain
 For the dance to turn to earnest?—O the sunny land of Spain!
 My Gitana, my Saliya! more delicious than a dove!
 With your hair aflame with roses and your lips alight with love!
 Shall I see you, shall I kiss you once again? I wander far
 From the sunny land of summer to the icy Polar Star.
 I shall find you, I shall have you! I am coming back again
 From the filth and fog to seek you in the sunny land of Spain.
 I shall find you, my my Gitana, my Saliya! as of old
 With your hair aflame with roses and your body gay with gold.
 I shall find you, I shall have you, in the summer and the south
 With our passion in your body and our love upon your mouth—
 With our wonder and our worship be the world aflame anew!
 My Gitana, my Saliya! I am coming back to you!

The men breathed freer. So powerfully did the song lift them that through the open window all the fragrance of Spain and its roses seemed to flow into the room.

Only Arthur Gray never smiled.

The big man looked at him. What is it? he said sharply.

We are all Gods! (said Arthur) knowing good and evil, and that which is beyond. But I love Holbein House and London—dear vile London!

What can I do?

And he began mournfully to recite:

THE POET

BURY me in a nameless grave!
I came from God the world to save,
I brought them wisdom from above:
Worship, and liberty, and love.
They slew me for I did disparage
Therefore Religion, Law, and Marriage.
So be my grave without a name
That earth may swallow up my shame.

Arthur! said the big man, more tenderly than he had yet spoken, there was once a man like you. He wished your wish, not with tears, but with laughter; he had his wish, as you shall have yours. In spite of all, that nameless man is widely known as any in the world: they call him Jesus Chirst. Now all the evil wrought by Jesus Christ is nothing to the wish of that unknown poet. From this pinnacle of Adeptship we weigh the Universe in other scales—but this doctrine is known to you and understood of you, and I need say no more.

Then said Arthur: Verily, all is Maya, all! He is God, and there is none other God than He!

In silence his guests went down the narrow stairs. Arthur Gray turned him to the window and looked out on the blank wall of Holbein House.

Well? said the Man.

But the Socialist had hanged himself in his own red necktie. He had seen God, and died.